

FAVOURITE FAIRY TALES

TO READ ALOUD

Illustrated by WILLIAM WIESNER



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RAPUNZEL

THERE was once a man and his wife who had long wished in vain for a child, and at last they had reason to hope that heaven would grant their wish. There was a little window at the back of their house, which overlooked a beautiful garden full of lovely flowers and shrubs. It was, however, surrounded by a high wall, and nobody dared to enter it,

because it belonged to a powerful witch who was feared by everybody.

One day the woman, standing at this window and looking into the garden, saw a bed planted with beautiful rampion. It looked so fresh and green that she longed to eat some of it. This longing increased every day. And as she knew it could never be satisfied, she began to look pale and ill. Her husband became alarmed and asked, 'What ails you, my dear wife?'

'Alas!' she answered. 'If I cannot get any of the rampion to eat from the garden behind our house, I shall die.'

Her husband, who loved her, thought, 'Cost what it may, I must fetch some of that rampion.' So in the twilight he climbed over the wall into the witch's garden, hastily picked a handful of rampion, and took it back to his wife. She immediately prepared it and ate it eagerly. It was so very, very good that the next day her longing for it increased three-fold. She could have no peace unless her husband fetched her some more. So in the twilight he set out again, but when he got over the wall, the witch appeared before him.

'How dare you come into my garden like a thief and steal my rampion?' she said angrily. 'It shall be the worse for you!'

'Alas!' he answered. 'Be merciful to me. I am here only because my wife sees your rampion from the window, and she has such a longing for it that she would die if she could not get some of it.'

'If it is as you say,' said the witch, 'I will allow you to take away with you as much rampion as you like, but on one condition. You must give me the child which your wife is about to bring into the world. I will care for it like a mother, and all will be well with it.'

In his fear the man consented to everything. And when the baby was born, the witch appeared, gave it the name of Rapunzel (rampion), and took it away with her.

Rapunzel was the most beautiful child under the sun. When she was twelve years old, the witch shut her up in a tower which stood in a wood. It had neither staircase nor doors, but only a little window high up in the wall.

When the witch wanted to enter the tower, she stood at the foot of it and cried, 'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!'



Rapunzel had long splendid hair, as fine as spun gold. As soon as she heard the voice of the witch, she unfastened her braids and twisted her hair round a hook by the window. It fell downward, and the witch climbed up by it.

It happened a number of years later that the King's son rode through the forest and

came close to the tower. He heard a song so lovely that he stopped to listen. It was Rapunzel who, in her loneliness, made her sweet voice resound to pass away the time. The King's son wanted to join her, and he sought for the door of the tower, but there was none.

He rode home, but the song had touched his heart so deeply that he went into the forest every day to listen to it. Once when he was hidden behind a tree he saw a witch come to the tower and call out, 'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!'

Then Rapunzel lowered her hair and the witch climbed up to her. 'If that is the ladder,' he thought, 'I will try it myself.' And the next day, when it began to grow dark, he went to the tower and cried, 'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!'

The hair fell down and the King's son climbed up it.

At first Rapunzel was terrified, for she had never set eyes on a man before. But the King's son talked to her kindly, and told her that his heart had been so deeply touched by her song that he had no peace and was obliged to see her. Then Rapunzel lost her

fear. And when he asked if she would have him for her husband, and she saw that he was young and handsome, she thought, 'He will love me better than old Mother Gothel.' So she said, 'Yes,' and laid her hand in his. She said, 'I will gladly go with you, but I do not know how I am to get down from this tower. When you come, will you bring a skein of silk with you every time? I will twist it into a ladder, and when it is long enough I will descend by it, and you can take me away with you on your horse.'

She arranged with him that he should come and see her every evening, for the old witch came in the daytime.

The witch discovered nothing till suddenly Rapunzel said to her, 'Tell me, Mother Gothel, how can it be that you are so much heavier to draw up than the young prince who will be here before long?'

'Oh, you wicked child, what do you say? I thought I had separated you from all the world, and yet you have deceived me.' In her rage she seized Rapunzel's beautiful hair, twisted it twice round her left hand, snatched up a pair of shears, and cut off the braids,



which fell to the ground. She was so merciless that she took poor Rapunzel away into a wilderness, where she forced her to live in the greatest grief and misery.

In the evening of the day on which she had banished Rapunzel, the witch fastened the braids, which she had cut off, to the hook by the window. And when the Prince called:

'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!'—she lowered the hair. The Prince climbed up, but there he found, not his beloved Rapunzel, but the witch.

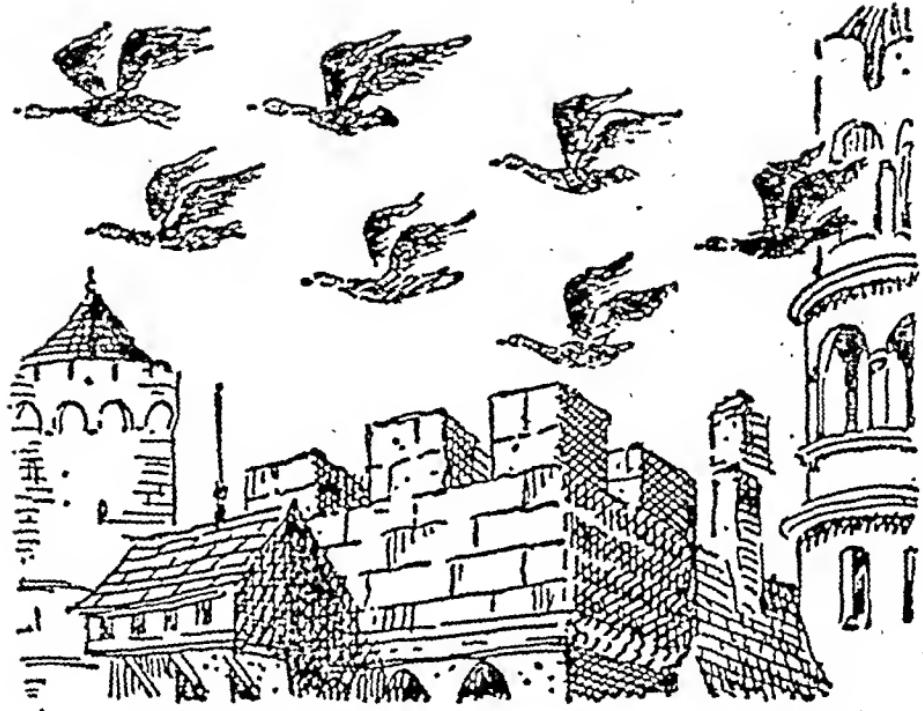
'Ah!' she cried mockingly, 'you have come to fetch your ladylove, but the pretty bird is no longer in her nest. And she can sing no more, for the cat has seized her and it will scratch your own eyes out too. Rapunzel is lost to you. You will never see her again.'

The Prince was beside himself with grief, and in his despair he sprang out of the window. He was not killed, but his eyes were scratched out by the thorns among which he fell. He wandered about blind in the wood and had nothing but roots and berries to eat. He did nothing but weep and lament over the loss of his beloved one, Rapunzel. In this way

he wandered about for some years, till at last he reached the wilderness where Rapunzel had been living very sadly in great poverty.

He heard a voice which seemed very familiar to him and he went towards it. Rapunzel knew him at once and fell weeping upon his neck. Two of her tears fell upon his eyes; and they immediately grew quite clear and he could see as well as ever.

He took her to his kingdom, where he was received with joy. There they married and lived long and happily together.



THE WILD SWANS

*Adapted and abridged from the story
by HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN*

FAR AWAY, where the swallows fly when winter comes, lived a king who had eleven sons and a daughter. The eleven brothers wrote upon golden slates with diamond pencils and could read just as well without a book as with one, so there was no mistake about their being real princes. Elise, their sister, sat upon a little glass footstool, and she had

a picture book which had cost half a kingdom. These children were very happy.

But it was not to last. The king married a wicked queen who was not at all kind to the children. They found that out on the first day. When the children wanted to play at having company, instead of having as many cakes or apples as they wanted, she would only let them have some sand in a teacup, and said they must make believe.

The next week she sent little Elise into the country to live with a farmer and his wife, and it did not take her long to make the king believe so many bad things about the boys that he cared no more about them.

'Fly out into the world and look after yourselves,' said the wicked queen. 'You shall fly about like birds without voices.'

But she could not make things as bad for them as she would have liked. They turned into eleven beautiful wild swans and flew out of the palace window, right over the park and into the woods.

It was early in the morning when they came to the place where their sister Elise was sleeping in the farmer's house. They hovered

over the roof, turning and twisting their long necks and flapping their wings, but no one heard or saw them. They had to fly away, up towards the clouds, far out into the wide world. They settled in a dark wood which stretched down to the shore.

In the farmer's house, little Elise, having no other toys, played with a small green leaf. She looked through a little hole in it and it seemed to her that she could see her brothers' clear eyes. She longed to see them again, but it was not to be. Time passed by.

Elise was to go home when she was fifteen, but when that time came and the queen saw how pretty she was, she became angry. She would have turned her into a wild swan at once, like her brothers, but she did not dare, for the king wanted to see his daughter. Still, the queen had a plan.

She took three toads and said to the first, 'Sit upon Elise's head when she comes to the bath, so that she may be as dull and slow as you.'

To the second toad she said, 'Sit upon her forehead, that she may be as ugly as you, and then her father won't know her!'

To the third toad she said, 'Rest upon her heart, that she may have a burden of cares.'

Then she placed the toads in the water of the bath and a green colour came over it. She called Elise and bade her go into the bath. When Elise did so, one of the toads got into her hair, another sat on her forehead, and the third on her heart. But when she stood up, three scarlet poppies floated on the water! The creatures had become flowers from merely having rested a moment on Elise's head and heart. She was far too innocent for the sorcery to have any power over her!

When the wicked queen saw this, she rubbed Elise with walnut juice, smeared her face with an evil-smelling salve, and matted her beautiful hair. It would have been impossible for anyone to recognize pretty Elise. Even when her father saw her, he said that she could not be his daughter.

Elise wept and thought of her eleven brothers who were gone. She left the palace and wandered about all day, over meadows and marshes, and into a big forest. She did not know where she wanted to go, but she felt very sad.

Elise made up her mind to go and look for her brothers, but she had only been in the wood for a short time when night fell. She lay down upon the soft moss, said her prayer, and rested her head against a tree stump. It was very still and the air was mild. Hundreds of glowworms shone around her like green fire. When she awoke in the morning, she went to a pond to wash. There, reflected in the water, she saw her discoloured face. She wet her hand, rubbed her skin well, and soon looked again like the beautiful royal child that she was.

Walking farther into the forest, she met an old woman with a basket full of berries who shared them with her. As she ate, Elise asked the woman if she had ever seen the eleven princes who were her brothers.

'No,' replied the old woman. 'But yesterday I saw eleven swans, with golden crowns upon their heads, swimming in the stream.'

She then led Elise to a slope, at the foot of which flowed the stream. Elise thanked her and then walked along by the river till it flowed out to the open sea.

But not a sail was to be seen on the sea, nor



a single boat. How was she to get any farther? She looked at the pebbles on the beach, all worn round by the water. Glass, iron, stone—whatever was washed up—had been shaped

by the water, which yet was much softer than her hand. She determined then and there that she would be as untiring as the sea in seeking her brothers.

When the sun was just about to set, Elise saw eleven wild swans with golden crowns upon their heads flying toward the shore. They flew one behind the other, like a white ribbon streamer. Elise climbed up on the bank and hid behind a bush. The swans settled close by and flapped their great white wings.

As soon as the sun had set, the swans shed their feathers and became eleven handsome princes. They were Elise's brothers. Although they had changed, she knew them at once. She sprang into their arms, calling them by name. They were delighted when they recognized their little sister who had grown so big and beautiful. They laughed and cried, and told each other how wickedly their step-mother had treated them all.

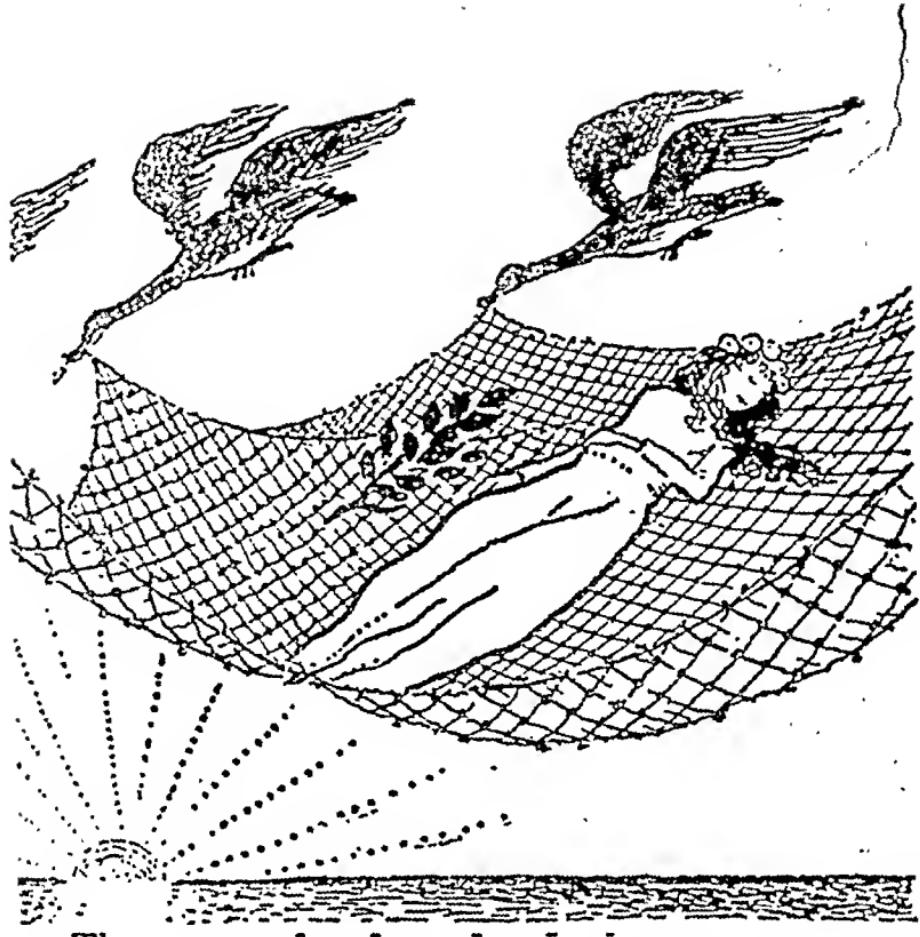
'We brothers fly about as swans when the sun is in the sky,' said the eldest, 'but when it goes down, we regain our human shapes. We always have to look for a resting place near sunset, for should we happen to be flying

up among the clouds, we would drop to the earth below. We do not live here. There is another land beyond the sea—but we must cross the ocean to get to it. There is only one lonely rock midway across which is just big enough for us to stand upon close together in our human form. Our flight takes two of the longest days in the year. Two days longer we may stay here, and then we must fly away again across the ocean.'

'How can I save you?' asked their sister. They talked about it nearly the whole night, only dozing for a few hours.

Elise was awakened by the rustling of the swans' wings as they soared above. Her brothers were again changed to swans and they flew round in wide circles, till they were far away. One of them—the youngest—stayed behind. He laid his head in her lap and she stroked it lovingly. They remained together all day. Towards evening the others came back, and as the sun went down they stood there in their natural forms.

'Tomorrow we must fly away,' said the brothers, 'and we cannot come back for a whole year. But we can't leave you like this!



Have you courage to go with us? Surely all our strength ought to be enough to carry you across the ocean.'

'Yes—please take me with you,' said Elise. They spent the whole night in weaving a net from the elastic bark of the willow, bound together with rushes. It was large and strong; Elise lay down upon it, and when the sun rose and the brothers became swans again, they took up the net in their bills and flew up to the

clouds with their sister, who was still asleep. The sunbeams fell on her face, so one of the swans flew over her head to provide some shade.

They were far from land when Elise woke up. She thought she must still be dreaming, it seemed so strange to be carried through the air. By her side lay a branch of ripe berries which her youngest brother had gathered for her. She smiled her thanks to him. She knew it was he who flew above her head, shading her from the sun.

Onward the whole day they flew through the air, but they went slower than usual, for now they had their sister to carry. A storm came up, and night was drawing on. Elise saw the sun sinking and the rock was not yet in sight. The swans seemed to be taking stronger strokes than ever. Alas, she was the cause of their not being able to get on faster. As soon as the sun went down they would become men and fall into the sea.

The sun now touched the edge of the ocean. Elise's heart trembled, when suddenly the swans darted downward so swiftly that she thought they were falling. Then they hov-



you must feel. Do you see this stinging nettle I hold in my hand? Many of these weeds grow round the cave where you sleep. Only these and the ones which grow in the church-yards may be used. These you must pluck,

though they will burn and blister your hands. Crush the nettles with your feet and you will have flax, and of this you must weave eleven coats with long sleeves. Throw these over the eleven wild swans and the spell will be broken. But remember, from the moment you begin this work until it is finished, you must not speak even a word! The first word you say will pierce the hearts of your brothers. Their lives hang upon your tongue.'

When Elise awoke, it was bright daylight. She fell upon her knees with thanks to God and left the cave to begin her work.

She grasped the stinging nettles with her delicate hands, and great blisters rose on her hands and arms, but she suffered willingly. Then she crushed every nettle with her bare feet, and twisted it into flax.

When the sun went down and the brothers came back, they were alarmed at finding her speechless. They thought it was some new sorcery of their wicked stepmother's. But when they saw her hands, they understood. The youngest brother wept, and wherever his tears fell, she felt no more pain, and the blisters disappeared.



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"How did you come here, beautiful child?" he asked.

Elise shook her head, for she dared not speak. The lives of her brothers depended upon her silence. She hid her hands under her apron, so that the king might not see what she had suffered.

"Come with me," he said. "You cannot stay

though they will burn and blister your hands. Crush the nettles with your feet and you will have flax, and of this you must weave eleven coats with long sleeves. Throw these over the eleven wild swans and the spell will be broken. But remember, from the moment you begin this work until it is finished, you must not speak even a word! The first word you say will pierce the hearts of your brothers. Their lives hang upon your tongue.'

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As she stood before them in all her splendour, she was so lovely that the court bowed low before her, although the archbishop shook his head and whispered that he feared the young maiden was a witch who had dazzled their eyes and led astray the heart of the king.



The king refused to listen to him. He ordered music to be played and the richest food to be brought forward. Elise was led through fragrant gardens and gorgeous halls, but nothing brought a smile to her lips or into her eyes. Sorrow sat there for all time.

Then the king opened the door of a little room. On the floor were costly green carpets, made to resemble exactly the cave where he had found her. The bundle of flax she had spun from the nettles was there, too, and from the ceiling hung the coat she had made. One of the huntsmen had brought all these things away from the cave as curiosities.

'Here you may dream that you are back in your former home,' said the king. 'It may amuse you to think of those times.'

When Elise saw the things so dear to her heart, she smiled at last and kissed the king's hand joyfully. He pressed her to his heart and ordered the church bells to ring out the news that the silent lovely girl from the woods was to be queen of the country.

The archbishop, still suspecting the girl to be a witch of some kind, whispered his wicked thoughts to the king, but the king could not find it in his heart to believe him. The wedding was still to take place, and the archbishop himself had to place the crown upon her head. In his anger he pressed the narrow circlet so tightly upon her head that it caused her pain. But a heavier weight pressed upon

her heart—sorrow for her brothers—so she did not cry out.

Every day Elise's heart turned more and more to the good and handsome king, who did everything to please her. She longed to confide in him and tell him of her grief, but silent she had to remain. Therefore, each night she went quietly into the little room to weave one coat after another. When she came to the seventh, however, she had no flax left. She knew that the nettles she could use grew in the churchyard, and she had to pluck them herself.

With a trembling heart, as if she were doing some wicked deed, she crept out one night into the moonlit garden and passed through the silent streets to the churchyard. There she picked the stinging nettles and hurried back to the palace with them.

Only one person saw her, and that was the archbishop. Now he felt sure that all was not as it should be with her. She was a witch—he was sure of that—and she had bewitched the king and all the people.

When the king heard what the archbishop had seen, he was much distressed. He pre-

of her mysterious movements, they judged: 'She is a witch. She must die by fire!'

Elise was led away from her beautiful royal apartments to a dark, damp dungeon, where the wind whistled through iron bars. Instead of velvet and silk they gave her the coats which she had woven to cover her, and the bundle of nettles for a pillow. But nothing could have pleased her more. She set to work again with a prayer.

Toward evening she heard the flutter of a swan's wing. It was her youngest brother—he had found his sister, and he sobbed with joy, although he knew that the coming night might be her last. But then, her work was almost done and her brothers were near.

Then the archbishop arrived, to be with her during her last hours, as he had promised the king. But she shook her head and begged him, by looks and gestures, not to stay, for she had only this night in which to finish her work.

The little mice ran about the floor, bringing nettles to her feet, so as to give what help they could, and a thrush sat outside the window, singing all night to keep up her courage.

It was still an hour before sunrise when the eleven brothers stood at the palace gate, demanding to be brought before the king. This could not be, was the answer, for it was still too early for the king to be awakened. All their pleas were useless. Then the king himself came to see what all the noise meant, but just then the sun rose, and no more brothers were to be seen—only eleven wild swans flying over the palace.

Now the people came streaming forth from the gates of the city to see the witch burned. An old horse drew the cart in which Elise sat. They had dressed her in coarse sackcloth and her beautiful long hair hung loose. Her cheeks were pale and her lips moved silently, while her fingers still worked at the green flax. Even on the way to her death she would not give up her task. Ten coats lay completed at her feet, she was working hard at the eleventh, while the people jeered her and said, ‘See the witch, how she mutters! She sits there with her ugly sorcery. Take it away from her, and tear it into a thousand bits!’

The crowd pressed around her to destroy her work, but just then eleven wild swans

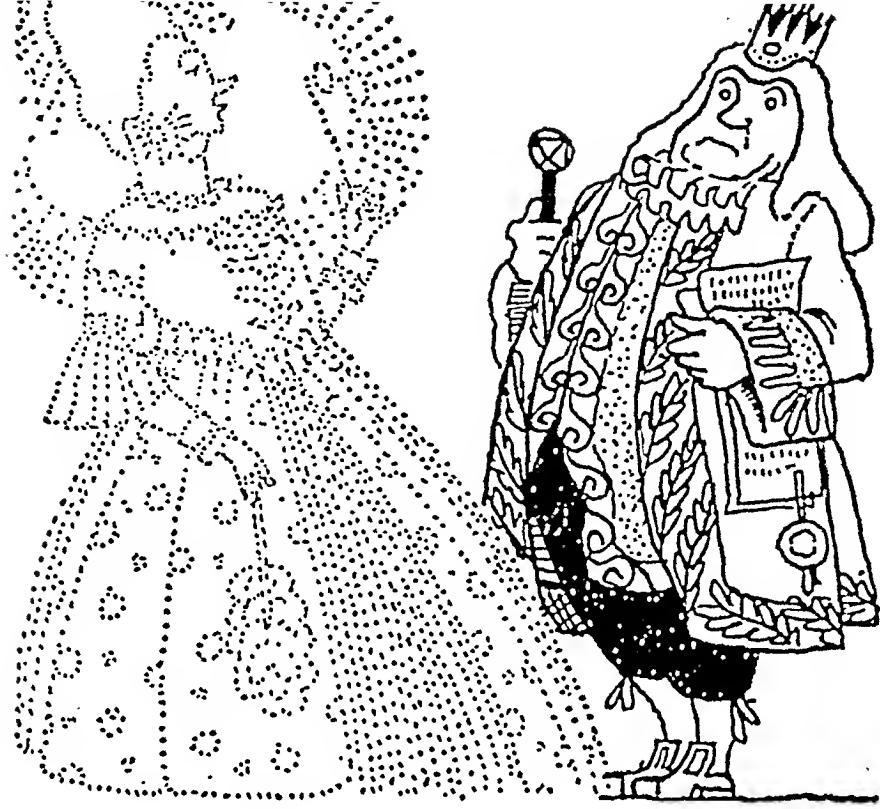
flew down and perched upon the cart, flapping their wings. Elise hastily threw the eleven coats over the swans, who were immediately changed to eleven handsome princes. But the youngest had a swan's wing instead of an arm, for she had not been able to finish the last sleeve of the coat.

'Now I may speak!' she exclaimed. 'I am innocent!'

The people who saw what had happened bowed before her as before a saint, but she fainted into her brothers' arms, so great had been the strain, the fear and the suffering she had endured.

'Yes, she is innocent,' said the eldest brother, and he told them all that had happened.

When Elise awoke from her swoon, her heart was filled with joy and peace. All the church bells began to ring of their own accord, birds sang sweetly, and a wedding procession went back to the palace such as no king had ever seen before!



THE MAGIC FISHBONE

*Adapted and abridged from the story
by CHARLES DICKENS*

ONCE upon a time there was a king and a queen who lived royally but not as well as did other kings and queens. The reason for this was quite plain. They had nineteen chil-

dren who were forever growing out of their clothes and keeping them poor.

One day, on his way to the government office, the king stopped by at the fish market to buy a pound and a half of salmon, not too near the tail, which the queen had asked him to send home. Mr. Pickles, the shopkeeper, said, 'Certainly, sir,' and then asked, 'Will there be anything else, sir?'

The king shook his head. Sadly he thought that, even if he had wanted to buy more, he probably could not afford it. Money was scarce and pay-day for him was still a long way off.

The king had not gone far, after leaving the market, when Mr. Pickles' delivery boy came running after him. 'Sir,' he said breathlessly, 'you didn't notice the old lady in our shop.'

'What old lady?' inquired the king. He had indeed not seen any old lady, for she had been invisible to him at the time. But before anything more could be said of it, she appeared before him quite visibly, dressed in shot-silk of the richest quality and smelling of dried lavender.

'King Watkins the First, I believe?' said the old lady.

'Watkins,' replied the king, 'is my name.'

'And, if I'm not mistaken, father of the beautiful Princess Alicia?'

'Among others,' replied the king proudly. 'She is my eldest.'

'Now you are on your way to the office, of course,' said the old lady.

It flashed upon the king that this lady must be a fairy. How else could she have known that?

'You are right,' the old lady said, answering his thoughts. 'I am the good Fairy Grandmarina. Now, listen—when you return home to dinner tonight, you must invite the Princess Alicia to have some of the salmon you bought just now.'

'It may disagree with her,' said the king.

The fairy suddenly became very angry at this absurd idea. 'We hear much too much about this thing disagreeing and that thing disagreeing,' she snorted. 'I think you want the fish all to yourself.'

The king hung his head and said that he would not talk any more about things disagreeing.

'Be good, then,' said the Fairy Grandmarina, 'and don't! Now, then, when the beautiful Princess Alicia eats the salmon—as I think she will—you will find that she will leave a fishbone on her plate: Tell her to dry it, and rub it, and polish it till it shines like mother-of-pearl, and to take care of it as a present from me.'

'Is that all?' asked the king.

'Don't be so impatient!' scolded the Fairy Grandmarina. 'That's just the way with you grown-up people—always interrupting before others have done speaking!'

The king again hung his head and said he wouldn't interrupt again.

'Be good, then,' said the Fairy Grandmarina, 'and don't! Tell the Princess Alicia, with my love, that the fishbone is a magic gift which can only be used once. It will bring her, that once, whatever she wishes for, *provided she wishes for it at the right time.*'

The king opened his mouth to ask, 'Might I ask the reason?' when the fairy stamped her foot furiously. 'Will you be good, sir?' she exclaimed. 'The reason for this and the reason for that! I am tired of you grown-ups

always wanting a reason. There's no reason! There!"

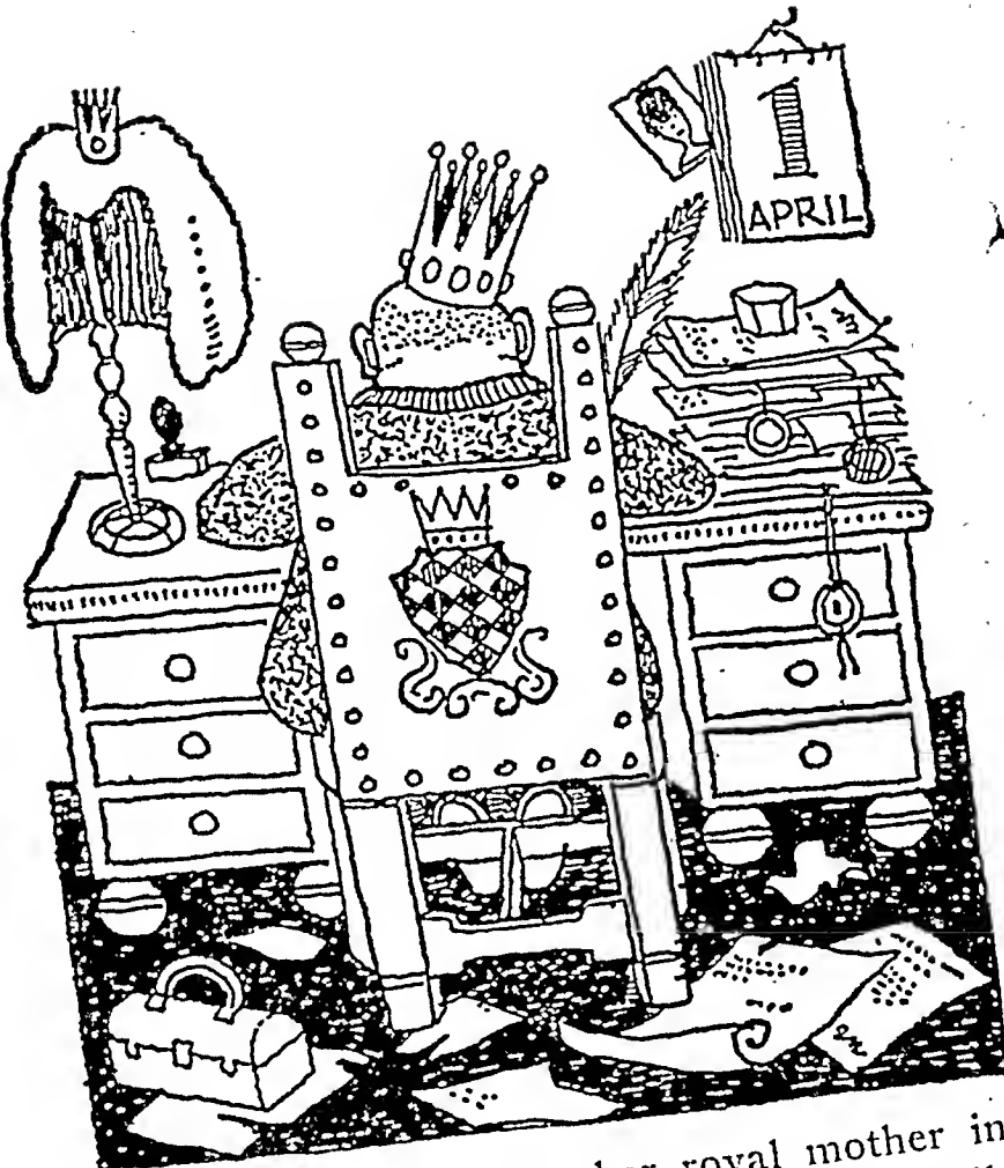
The king was extremely frightened at the old lady's temper. He said that he was very sorry to have offended her and that he wouldn't ask for reasons any more.

'Be good, then,' said the old lady, 'and don't!'

With those words, Grandmarina vanished, and the king went on and on and on, till he came to the office. There he wrote and wrote and wrote, till it was time to go home again. Then he politely invited the Princess Alicia, as the fairy had directed him, to eat some salmon. When she had enjoyed it very much, the king saw the fishbone on her plate, as the fairy had told him he would. He delivered the fairy's message, and the Princess Alicia took care to dry the bone, and to rub it, and to polish it till it shone like mother-of-pearl.

The very next morning, when the queen was about to get up, she moaned, 'Oh, dear me—my head, my head!' Then she fell back on her pillow.

Princess Alicia, who happened to be looking in just then to ask about breakfast, was



alarmed when she saw her royal mother in this state, but remembering where the smelling bottle was, she got it and held it to the queen's nose. After that, she got some water and dampened a cloth and held it to the queen's forehead.

But that was not the worst of the good queen's illness. She was very ill for a long time. The Princess Alicia kept the seventeen young princes and princesses quiet, and dressed and undressed and danced the baby, and made the kettle boil, and heated the soup, and swept the hearth, and poured out the medicine, and took care of the queen, and did all that she could, for there were not many servants at that palace.

But on the morning when the queen fainted away, where was the magic fishbone? In the Princess Alicia's pocket! She had almost used it to revive the queen, when she put it back and looked for the smelling bottle.

After the queen had come out of her swoon that morning and was dozing, the Princess Alicia hurried upstairs to tell a most particular secret to a most particular friend of hers, who was a duchess. People thought her to be a doll, but then, they really knew no better.

The duchess smiled and nodded as the Princess Alicia told her the secret about the magic fishbone. People might have supposed that she never smiled and nodded, but she often did—though nobody knew it but the princess.

Then the Princess Alicia hurried downstairs again to keep watch in the queen's room. She often kept watch by herself in the queen's room; but every evening, while the illness lasted, she sat there watching with the king. And every evening the king sat looking at her with a cross look, wondering why she never brought out the magic fishbone.

When Alicia noticed this, she ran upstairs and whispered to the duchess, 'They think we children never have a reason or a meaning!' And the duchess, who was usually quite dignified, winked her eye.

'Alicia,' said the king one evening when she wished him good night.

'Yes, Father.'

'What has become of the magic fishbone?'

'It's in my pocket, Father.'

'I thought you had lost it.'

'Oh, no, Father!'

'Or forgotten it.'

'No, indeed, Father!'

And so, another time, when one of the young princes cut his hand on a piece of glass, Princess Alicia put the wounded prince's hand in a basin of fresh cold water and then looked

in the hand for bits of glass which fortunately were not there. Then she said to two princes who were sturdy though small, 'Bring me the royal rag bag. I must snip and stitch and cut.'

The two young princes tugged at the royal rag bag and pulled it in. And the Princess Alicia sat down on the floor with a large pair of scissors and a needle and thread, and snipped and stitched and cut, and made a bandage and put it on. It fitted beautifully. And when it was all done, she saw the king looking on by the door.

'Alicia.'

'Yes, Father.'

'What have you been doing?'

'Snipping, stitching and cutting, Father.'

'Where is the magic fishbone?'

'It's in my pocket, Father.'

'I thought you had lost it.'

'Oh, no, Father!'

'Or forgotten it.'

'No, indeed, Father!'

After that, she ran upstairs and told her what had passed, the secret all over again,



shook her flaxen curls and laughed with her
rosy lips.

Another time the baby fell off his chair. The seventeen young princes and princesses were used to it, for they were almost always falling off their chairs or down the stairs. But the baby was not used to it yet and it gave him some bruises and a black eye. Then the seventeen young princes and princesses, who cried at everything that happened, cried and roared. But the Princess Alicia (who couldn't help crying a little herself) quietly called to them to be still, on account of the queen, who was fast getting well. Then she examined the baby and found that he hadn't broken anything; and she treated his poor dear eye, and smoothed his poor dear face, and he soon fell asleep in her arms.

Then she said to the seventeen princes and princesses, 'I am afraid to let him down yet—he might wake up and feel the pain—so be good and you shall all be cooks.' They jumped for joy when they heard that and began making themselves cooks' caps out of old newspapers. To one Alicia gave the salt box, and to one she gave the barley, and to one she gave the herbs, and to one she gave the turnips, and to one she gave the carrots, and to

one she gave the onions, and to one she gave the spice box, till they were all cooks and all running about at work.

By and by the broth was done, and the baby woke up, smiling. Princess Alicia served the broth, which was steaming beautifully, and the other princes and princesses clapped their hands. That made the baby clap his hands—and that made all the princes and princesses laugh. They ate up all the broth, and washed the plates and dishes, and cleared away, and pushed the table into a corner. And then they, in their cooks' caps, and the Princess Alicia, danced a dance of eighteen cooks before the baby, who forgot his bruises and his black eye and crowed with joy.

Then once more the Princess Alicia saw King Watkins the First, her father, standing in the doorway looking on, and he said, 'What have you been doing, Alicia?'

'Cooking, Father.'

'What else have you been doing, Alicia?'

'Keeping the children light-hearted, Father.'

'Where is the magic fishbone, Alicia?'

'It's in my pocket, Father.'

'I thought you had lost it.'

'Oh, no, Father!'

'Or forgotten it.'

'No, indeed, Father!'

The king then sighed so heavily and seemed so sad that the seventeen princes and princesses crept softly out of the kitchen, and left him alone with the Princess Alicia and the baby.

'What is the matter, Father?'

'I am dreadfully poor, my child.'

'Have you no money at all, Father?'

'None, my child.'

'Is there no way of getting any, Father?'

'No way,' said the king. 'I have tried very hard and I have tried all ways.'

When she heard those last words, the Princess Alicia began to put her hand into the pocket where she kept the magic fishbone.

'Father,' she said, 'when we have tried very hard, and tried all ways, we must have done our very, very best.'

'No doubt, Alicia.'

'When we have done our very, very best, and that is not enough, then I think the right time must have come for asking help of others.' This was the very secret connected with

the magic fishbone, which she had found out for herself from the good Fairy Grandmrina's words, and which she had so often whispered to the duchess.

So she took out of her pocket the magic fishbone that had been dried and rubbed and polished till it shone like mother-of-pearl, and she gave it one little kiss, and wished it to be pay-day. And immediately it was pay-day—and the king's salary came rattling down the chimney, bouncing to the middle of the floor.

Just then, the good Fairy Grandmarina came riding in, in a carriage drawn by four peacocks, with Mr. Pickles' boy up behind, elegantly dressed in silver and gold. Down jumped Mr. Pickles' boy, wonderfully polite (being entirely changed by enchantment), and helped Grandmarina out. There she stood, in her rich shot-silk dress smelling of dried lavender, fanning herself with a sparkling fan.

'Alicia, my dear,' said the fairy, 'how do you do? I hope you are well. Do give me a kiss.'

The Princess Alicia embraced her. Then Grandmarina turned to the king and said rather sharply, 'Are you good?'

The king said he hoped so.



'I suppose you know the reason now, why my goddaughter here did not use the fishbone sooner.'

The king made a shy bow.

'Ah! But you didn't know then?' said the fairy.

The king said, 'No,' and he was very sorry.

'Be good, then,' said the fairy, 'and live happily ever after.'

Then Grandmarina waved her fan, and the queen came in most splendidly dressed. The seventeen young princes and princesses, no longer grown out of their clothes, came in newly fitted from top to toe. After that, the fairy tapped the Princess Alicia with her fan and she appeared exquisitely dressed, like a little bride. After that, the baby came in running alone, with his face and eye not a bit the worse, but much the better. Then Grandmarina begged to be introduced to the duchess, and when the duchess was brought down, many compliments passed between them.

A little whispering took place between the fairy and the duchess, and then the fairy said out loud, 'Yes, I thought she would have told you.' Grandmarina then turned to the king and queen and said, 'We are going in search of Prince Certainpersonio.'

Then she and the Princess Alicia got into

the carriage; and Mr. Pickles' boy helped in the duchess, who sat by herself in the opposite seat; and then Mr. Pickles' boy put up the steps and got up behind, and the peacocks flew away with their tails behind.

Prince Certainpersonio was sitting by himself in his room. When he saw the peacocks, followed by the carriage, coming in at the window, he knew that something unusual was going to happen.

'Prince,' said Grandmarina, 'I bring you your bride-to-be.'

The moment the fairy said those words, Prince Certainpersonio's jacket and corduroys changed to peach-bloom velvet, his straight hair became curly, and a cap and feather flew in like a bird and settled on his head.

In time the Princess Alicia and Prince Certainpersonio fell in love and the fairy arranged a magnificent wedding. At the wedding feast, there was everything and more to eat. The wedding cake was decorated with white satin ribbons, frosted silver and white lilies—and was forty-two yards round.

It was at that time that the Fairy Grand-

marina announced to the king and queen that there would be twice as many pay-days in every year, except in leap year, when there would be even more. She then turned to Certainpersonio and Alicia, and said, 'My dears, you will have thirty-five children, and they will all be good and beautiful. Seventeen of your children will be boys, and eighteen will be girls. All of your children will have naturally curly hair. They will never have the measles, and will have recovered from whooping cough before being born.'

And all this became perfectly true!





THE NIGHTINGALE.

*Adapted and abridged from the story
by HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN*

IN CHINA, once upon a time, there lived an Emperor whose palace was the most beautiful in the world. It was made of finest porcelain, so costly and so fragile that it could be touched only with the very greatest of care. In the garden were to be seen the most extraordinary flowers. The most beautiful ones had silver bells tied to them which tinkled,

so that no one could pass by without noticing them. Every little detail in the garden had been most carefully thought out, and it was so big that even the gardener himself did not know where it ended.

If one went on walking, one came to beautiful woods with tall trees and deep lakes. The wood extended to the sea, which was deep and blue—deep enough for large ships to sail up right under the branches of the trees. Among these trees lived a nightingale, which sang so sweetly that even the poor fisherman, who had many other things to do, lay still to listen to it when he was out at night drawing in his nets.

'How beautiful it is!' he murmured, but then he had to attend to his business and forgot the bird. The next night when he heard it he would again exclaim, 'How beautiful it is!'

Travellers came to the Emperor's capital from every country in the world. They admired everything very much. When they got home they described it, and learned men wrote many books about the town, the palace, and the garden. But nobody forgot the night-

ingale in the woods by the deep blue sea—it was always put above everything else.

The books went all over the world, and in time some of them came to the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, nodding his head, well pleased to read such beautiful descriptions of the town, the palace, and the garden. ‘*But the nightingale is the best of all,*’ he read.

‘What is this?’ said the Emperor. ‘The nightingale? Why, I know nothing about it. Is there such a bird in my empire, and in my own garden, and I have never heard of it? Imagine my discovering this from a book!’

Then he called his gentleman-in-waiting, who was so grand that when anyone of a lower rank dared to speak to him or to ask him a question, he would only answer, ‘P,’ which means nothing at all.

‘There is said to be a wonderful bird called a nightingale here,’ said the Emperor. ‘They say that it is better than anything else in all my great empire. Why have I never been told about it?’

‘I have never heard it mentioned,’ said the gentleman-in-waiting. ‘It has never been presented at court.’

'I wish it to appear here this evening to sing to me,' said the Emperor. 'The whole world seems to know what I have, except me!'

'I have never heard it mentioned before,' said the gentleman-in-waiting, 'but I will look for it, and I will find it.'

But where was it to be found? The gentleman-in-waiting ran upstairs and downstairs and in and out of all the rooms and halls. No one among those he met had ever heard anything about the nightingale. So the gentleman-in-waiting ran back to the Emperor and said that it must be a myth, invented by the writers of the books. 'Your Imperial Majesty must not believe everything that is written,' he added.

'But the book in which I read it was sent to me by the powerful Emperor of Japan,' said the Emperor. 'Therefore it can't be untrue. I will hear this nightingale—and tonight! I extend my most gracious protection to it, and if it is not forthcoming, I will have the whole court trampled upon after supper.'

'Tsing-pe!' said the gentleman-in-waiting, and away he ran again, up and down all the stairs, in and out of all the rooms and halls.

Half the court ran with him, for none of them wished to be trampled on. There was much questioning about this nightingale, which was known to all the outside world but to no one at court.

At last they found a poor little maid in the kitchen who said, 'Oh, the nightingale? I know it very well. Yes, indeed, it can sing. Every evening I am allowed to take food scraps to my poor sick mother who lives down by the shore. On my way back, when I am tired, I rest in the wood, and then I hear the nightingale. Its song brings tears into my eyes. I feel just as if my mother were kissing me.'

'Little kitchen maid,' said the gentleman-in-waiting, 'you will have a permanent position in the kitchen and permission to see the Emperor dine, if you will take us to the nightingale. It is commanded to appear at court tonight.'

Then they all went out into the wood where the nightingale usually sang. Half the court was there. As they were going along, a cow began to moo.

'Oh,' said a young attendant, 'there it is!'



What remarkable power for such a little creature. I have certainly heard it before.'

'No, those are cows bellowing,' said the kitchen maid. 'We are a long way from the place.' Then frogs began to croak in the marsh.

'How beautiful!' said the Chinese court chaplain. 'It is just like the tinkling of church bells.'

'No, those are the frogs,' said the kitchen maid. 'But I think we shall soon hear it now.'

Then the nightingale began to sing.

'Listen, listen! There it sits,' said the little girl. And she pointed to a little grey bird up among the branches.

'Is it possible?' said the gentleman-in-waiting. 'I should never have thought it was like that. How common it looks! Seeing so many grand people about must have frightened all its colours away.'

'Little nightingale!' called the kitchen maid. 'Our Gracious Emperor wishes you to sing to him.'

'With the greatest pleasure,' answered the nightingale, warbling in the most delightful fashion.

'It is just like crystal bells!' exclaimed the gentleman-in-waiting. 'Look at its little throat, how active it is! It is extraordinary that we have never heard it before. I am sure it will be a great success at court.'

'Shall I sing again for the Emperor?' asked the nightingale, who thought he was present.

'My dear little nightingale,' said the gentleman-in-waiting, 'I have the honour to in-

vite you to a court festival tonight. There you will charm His Gracious Majesty the Emperor with your singing.'

'It sounds best among the trees,' said the nightingale, but it went with them willingly when it heard that the Emperor wished it.

The palace had been brightened up for the occasion. The walls and the floors shone by the light of a thousand golden lamps. The most beautiful flowers, all of the tinkling kind, were arranged in the halls. There was much hurrying to and fro, and the draft from the movements set the bells ringing, so that one's ears were full of the tinkling.

In the middle of the large reception room where the Emperor sat, a golden rod had been fixed, on which the nightingale was to perch. The whole court was assembled, and the little kitchen maid had been permitted to stand behind the door, as she now had the title of Cook. They were all dressed in their best. Everybody's eyes were turned toward the little grey bird at which the Emperor was nodding.

The nightingale sang delightfully, and the tears came into the Emperor's eyes and rolled



down his cheeks. And when the nightingale sang more sweetly than ever, its notes melted all hearts. The Emperor was so pleased that he said the nightingale should have his gold slipper to wear round its neck. But the nightingale thanked him and said that it had

already been rewarded. 'I have seen tears in the eyes of the Emperor,' it said. And it again burst into its marvellously sweet song.

'How very delightful!' exclaimed the ladies. And they took some water into their mouths to try and make the same gurgling sound when anyone spoke to them, thinking so to imitate the nightingale. Even the lackeys and the chambermaids announced that they were satisfied, and that is saying a great deal, for they are always the most difficult people to please. Yes, the nightingale had made a sensation. It was to stay at court now, and have its own cage, as well as liberty to walk out twice a day and once in the night. It always had twelve servants along, with each one holding a ribbon tied round its leg. But, of course, there was not much pleasure in an outing of that kind.

The whole town talked about the marvellous bird. If two people met, one said to the other, 'Night,' and the other answered, 'Gale.' And then they sighed, understanding each other perfectly. Eleven newborn children were named after it, but not one among them could sing anything.

One day a large package came for the Emperor. Outside was written the word 'Nightingale.'

'Here we have another new book about this celebrated bird,' said the Emperor.

But it was not a book. It was a little work of art in a box—an artificial nightingale exactly like the living one, except that it was decorated with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. When wound up, it could sing one of the songs the real one sang, and it waggled its tail, which glittered with silver and gold. A ribbon was tied round its neck on which was written, 'The Emperor of Japan's nightingale is poor compared to that of the Emperor of China.'

Everybody said, 'Oh, how beautiful!' And the person who brought the artificial bird immediately received the title of Imperial Nightingale-Carrier-in-Chief.

'Now they must sing together. What a duet that will be!'

Then they had to sing together, but they did not get on very well, for the real nightingale sang in its own way and the artificial one could only play a record.

'There is no fault in that,' said the music master. 'It keeps perfect time.'

Then the artificial bird had to sing alone. It was just as great a success as the real one, and it was much prettier to look at, because it glittered like bracelets and breastpins.

It sang the same tune three and thirty times over, and yet it was not tired. People would willingly have heard it from the beginning again, but the Emperor said that the real one must have a turn now. But where was it? No one had noticed that it had flown out of the open window, back to its own green woods.

'What does this mean?' said the Emperor.

All the courtiers said that the real bird was most ungrateful. 'But we have the best bird after all,' they told the Emperor. And so the artificial bird had to sing again. This was the thirty-fourth time that they had heard the same tune, but they did not know it thoroughly even yet because it was so difficult.

The music master praised the bird highly and insisted that it was better than the real nightingale, not only on the outside with all its diamonds, but inside too.

'You see,' he explained, 'in the real nightingale you never know what you will hear, but in the artificial one everything is decided beforehand: So it is, and so it must remain. It can't be otherwise. You can open it at any time and show the clever arrangements, and how one note follows another as it plays.'

'Those are true words, indeed,' they all said, and the music master got permission to show the bird to the public next Sunday. They were also to hear it sing, said the Emperor. So they heard it, and then they all said, 'Oh!' and stuck their forefingers in the air and nodded their heads enthusiastically. But the poor fisherman who had heard the real nightingale said, 'It sounds very nice, and it is very nearly like the real one, but there is something missing. I don't know what.'

The real nightingale was banished from the empire and the artificial bird was given its place on a silken cushion, close to the Emperor's bed. All the presents of gold and precious jewels it had received were scattered round it. Its title was Chief Imperial Singer-of-the-Bed-Chamber.

The music master wrote twenty-five long



volumes about the artificial bird, all full of the most difficult Chinese words. Everybody said they had read and understood it, for otherwise they would have been thought stupid, and then they would have been trampled upon.

Things went on in this way for a whole year. The Emperor, the court, and all the other Chinese knew every little gurgle in the song of the artificial bird by heart. But they liked it all the better for this, and they could all join in the song themselves. The Emperor sang it too.

But one evening, when the bird was singing its best and the Emperor was lying in bed listening to it, something inside the bird said, 'Whizz!' The wheels went 'Whirr!' and the music stopped.

The Emperor jumped out of bed and sent for his private doctors, but what good could they do? Then they sent for the watchmaker who got the works to go again somehow. But he said the bird would have to be treated carefully, because it was worn out, and he could not renew the works so as to be sure of the tune. This was a great blow! They now dared to let the artificial bird sing only once a year, and hardly that. But then the music master made a little speech using all the most difficult Chinese words. He said it was just as good as ever, and his saying it made it so.

Five years passed, and then a great grief

came upon the nation. They were all very fond of their Emperor, and now he was ill and could not live, it was said. A new Emperor was already chosen, and people stood about in the street and asked the gentleman-in-waiting how the Emperor was getting on.

'P!' he answered, shaking his head.

The Emperor lay pale and cold in his gorgeous bed. The courtiers thought he was dead, and they all went off to bow to their new Emperor. The lackeys ran off to talk matters over, and the chambermaids gave a coffee party. In all the rooms and halls cloth had been laid down so as to deaden the sounds of footsteps, and it was very, very quiet. But the Emperor was not yet dead. There was an open window, and the moon shone in upon the Emperor and the artificial bird beside him.

The poor Emperor could hardly breathe. He seemed to have a weight on his chest. He opened his eyes and said, 'Precious little golden bird, sing! I have given you precious stones, and even hung my own golden slipper round your neck. Sing, I tell you, sing!'

But the bird stood silent. There was nobody to wind it up, so of course it could not go.

Suddenly, close to the window there was a burst of lovely song. It was the real nightingale, perched on a branch outside. It had heard of the Emperor's need and had come to bring comfort and hope. As it sang, the blood coursed with fresh vigour in the Emperor's veins and through his feeble limbs.

"Thanks, thanks!" gasped the Emperor. "You heavenly little bird, I know you. I banished you from my kingdom, and yet now you have charmed even Death away from my heart. How can I ever repay you?"

"You have rewarded me," said the nightingale. "I brought tears to your eyes the very first time I ever sang to you, and I shall never forget it. Those are the jewels which gladden the heart of a singer. But sleep now. I will sing to you."

Then it sang again, and the Emperor fell into a sweet refreshing sleep. The sun shone in at his window, and he awoke strong and well.

"You must always stay with me," said the Emperor. "You shall sing only when you like, and I will break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

'Don't do that,' said the nightingale. 'It did all the good it could. Keep it as you have always done. I can't build my nest and live in this palace, but let me come whenever I like. Then I will sit on the branch in the evening and sing to you. I will sing to cheer you and to make you thoughtful too. I will sing about the good and the evil, which are kept hidden from you. But you must promise me one thing.'

'Everything!' said the Emperor, who stood there in his imperial robes which he had just put on.

'Only one thing I ask you. Tell no one that you have a little bird who tells you everything. It will be better so!'



THE QUEEN BEE

TWO KING'S sons once upon a time went out into the world to seek their fortunes, but they soon fell into a wasteful, foolish way of living, so that they could not return home again.

Then their young brother, who was only a little dwarf, went out to look for his brothers. When he had found them, they laughed to think that he, who was so young and simple, should try to travel through the world, when they, who were so much wiser, had been unable to get on. However, they all set out on their journey together, and came at last to an anthill.

The two elder brothers at once wanted to destroy it in order to see how the poor ants in their fright would run about and carry off their eggs. But the little dwarf said, 'Let the poor things be. I will not allow you to trouble them.'

So on they went, and came to a lake where many, many ducks were swimming about. The two brothers wanted to catch two and roast them. But the dwarf said, 'Let the poor things alone. You shall not kill them.'

Next they came to a bees' nest in a hollow tree, and there was so much honey that it ran down the trunk. The two brothers wanted to light a fire under the tree and kill the bees, and get their honey. But the dwarf held them back, and said, 'I cannot let you burn them'

At last the three brothers came to a castle, and as they passed by the stables they saw fine horses standing there, but all were of marble, and no man was to be seen. Then they went through all the rooms till they came to a door on which were three locks: But in the middle of the door was an opening through which they could look into the next room. There they saw a little old man sitting at a table. They called to him once or twice, but he did not hear. However, they called a third time, and then he rose and came out to them.

He said nothing, but he led them to a beautiful table filled with all sorts of good things. When they had eaten and drunk he showed each of them to a bedroom.

The next morning he came to the eldest brother and took him to a marble table, where were three tablets. They told of the means by which the castle might be disenchanted. The first tablet said, 'In the wood, under the moss, lie the thousand pearls belonging to the king's daughter. They must all be found, and if one is missing by set of sun, he who seeks them will be turned into marble.'

The eldest brother set out and looked for



the pearls the whole day, but evening came and he had not found even the first hundred. He was turned into stone as the tablet had foretold.

The next day the second brother undertook the task, but he succeeded no better than the first. He could find only the second hundred of the pearls, so he too was turned into stone. At last came the little dwarf's turn, and he

looked in the moss. But it was so hard to find the pearls, and the job seemed so hopeless that he sat down upon a stone and cried. As he sat there the king of the ants (whose life he had saved) came to help him, with five thousand ants, and it was not long before they had found all the pearls and laid them in a heap.

The second tablet said, 'The key of the princess's room must be fished up out of the lake.' And as the dwarf came to the water's edge, he saw two ducks whose lives he had saved swimming about. They dived down and soon brought up the key from the bottom.

The third task was the hardest. It was to choose the youngest and best of the king's three daughters. They were all beautiful and all exactly alike, but he was told that the eldest had eaten a piece of sugar, the next some sweet syrup, and the youngest a spoonful of honey. He was to guess which one had eaten the honey.

Then came the queen of the bees, who had been saved by the little dwarf from the fire, and she tried the lips of all three. At last she sat upon the lips of the one who had eaten the

honey, so the dwarf knew which was the youngest.

Thus the spell was broken, and all who had been turned into stones awoke and took their proper forms. And the dwarf married the youngest and the best of the princesses, and was king after her father's death. His two brothers married the other two sisters.



LONG, BROAD, AND QUICK EYE

ONCE there lived a King whose only son he, and all his people, loved very dearly. He called the young man to his bedside one day and said, 'Son, I cannot remain with you much longer now, but before I die I would like to see you happily married.'

'Father,' replied the Prince, 'I ask nothing better than to do your bidding, but it will not be easy, for I have never seen anyone I would care to ask to marry me.'

'My son,' said the old King, drawing a golden key from beneath his pillow, 'I may be able to help you. Go to the highest tower in the castle, look well, and then tell me what you like best of that which you shall see.'

Until that moment the King had always forbidden the Prince to explore that tower, so it was with great eagerness that the young man, clutching the golden key, began to climb the winding stone stairs. Up and up he went, and at last he reached an iron door.

'Maybe this iron door will open to my golden key,' thought the Prince. He thrust the key into the lock. Immediately the door swung open, and he passed through.

The Prince now found himself in a circular room lit by twelve beautiful stained glass windows. In each window there was a likeness of a young girl, wrought in clear colours with wondrous skill. The Prince looked earnestly at each in turn, and he was just trying to decide which was the most lovely of the

twelve when he noticed that there was a thirteenth window, hidden by a curtain of pure white silk.

'I must not disobey my father,' thought the Prince, 'and his orders certainly were to look well.'

He drew back the curtain, and saw before him the image of a young girl a thousand times more beautiful than any of the others. They had either golden or chestnut hair, and hers was black as a raven's plume; they had brown or blue eyes, and hers were as pure a purple as the hyacinth; they wore coronets of gold, and her coronet was of pearls. But what struck the Prince more than anything else was the strange sadness in the maiden's lovely eyes.

'I will wed this lady and no other!' he exclaimed aloud. And then, to his astonishment, the pale cheeks of the glass image were flooded with pink, while all the other windows grew suddenly blank, as the pictures upon them faded away.

When the Prince came down from the tower and told his father what had taken place there, the old King began to weep.

'You did ill, my son,' said he, 'You should not have touched that curtain. S~~o~~ whom you love is in the power of a fearful ward who lives in a castle built of black iron. There you must go and seek her, and heaven knows if you will ever return.'

The Prince was a hopeful young fellow, and not easily worried. He bade his father farewell, then buckled on his sword, mounted his good steed, and rode forth in search of the iron castle.

When he had been riding for some time, he found himself in a thick wood. Deeper and deeper he rode into it, and more and more tangled and confusing did the track become. Just as he was beginning to wonder if he would ever find his way out, he saw a man coming toward him.

'Good day, sir,' said the man. 'Do you want a servant?'

'Not at this moment,' returned the Prince. 'Do you want a master, friend?'

'Yes, but I shall not want one for many days, I am so clever.'

'What can you do?'

'I can stretch myself to any height I please.'

Look—I can get you that bird's nest from the top of that pine without troubling to climb the tree.'

And as the Prince sat watching him, he grew and grew, until the top of the pine tree was on a level with his shoulder. Then he stretched out his hand and seized the nest. A moment later he had shrunk back to his usual size.

'You are certainly a clever fellow,' said the Prince. 'But, unfortunately, I don't collect birds' eggs. If you could guide me out of this wood, however, I might take you into my service.'

'That's easy,' returned the man. Up he shot into the air again, till he was taller than even the tallest trees. When he had looked all round him, he dwindled to his former height and then seized the bridle of the Prince's horse.

'Here lies our way,' he said. 'And now I am your servant. Long is my name. You will see that I shall serve you well.'

They were soon clear of the woods. Long then remarked to his new master, 'I see my old friend over there. I wish, my lord, that



you would also take him into your service.'

The Prince gazed about, but could see nobody.

'Call to him to come, so that I may have a look at him,' said he.

'He is too far away to hear me if I call,'

returned Long, ‘but your lordship shall see him soon.’

Then Long grew, and grew, till his head was hidden by the clouds. With his long legs he took three enormous steps forward, seized his friend, who was half a mile off, took three enormous steps back again, and said, ‘Your lordship, this is Broad.’

‘What can *you* do?’ the Prince asked of the very fat man who stood bowing before him.

‘My lord, I can make myself as wide as I please.’

‘I should like to see you do it,’ said the Prince.

‘Very good, my lord—but you had better get into the shelter of that wood first.’

Long had already darted between the trees, so the Prince touched his steed with the spur and followed. Then Broad drew a deep breath and puffed himself out, and grew bigger, and bigger, and bigger—until he had filled the whole landscape like some huge mountain.

‘That’s enough,’ cried the Prince, who was anxious to continue his search for the iron castle. ‘Return to your usual size, and I will take you into my service.’

So they went on their way together, and presently they met a man with his eyes blindfolded.

'My lord,' said Long, 'this is our third friend. You would be wise to take him also into your service, for there is no doubt he is the cleverest of us three.'

'Who are you, friend?' asked the Prince, as the stranger drew near. 'How can you see your way with that kerchief over your eyes?'

'My name is Quick Eye,' replied the man, 'and I can see more clearly through this kerchief than another man can see through eyeglasses. Without it, my eyes are too strong. Whatever I fix them upon either catches fire or splits apart.'

'I should like to see that,' said the Prince, 'but please do not fix your eyes upon me.'

Quick Eye untied his blindfold and looked toward a rock. A moment later the rock cracked from top to bottom. Something glittered in the crack. Quick Eye drew it forth and brought it to the Prince—it was a golden nugget.

'I will certainly take you into my service,' said the Prince. 'And, as your sight is so keen,

perhaps you can tell me if we are anywhere near the iron castle for which I am bound.'

'That is easy,' returned Quick Eye. 'Though the castle is many hundreds of miles away, I can see it now.'

'Can you see the magician to whom the castle belongs?'

'Oh, yes, my lord—and a fearfully ugly old man he is.'

'And,' asked the Prince, in a trembling voice, 'can you see the Princess whom he holds captive there?'

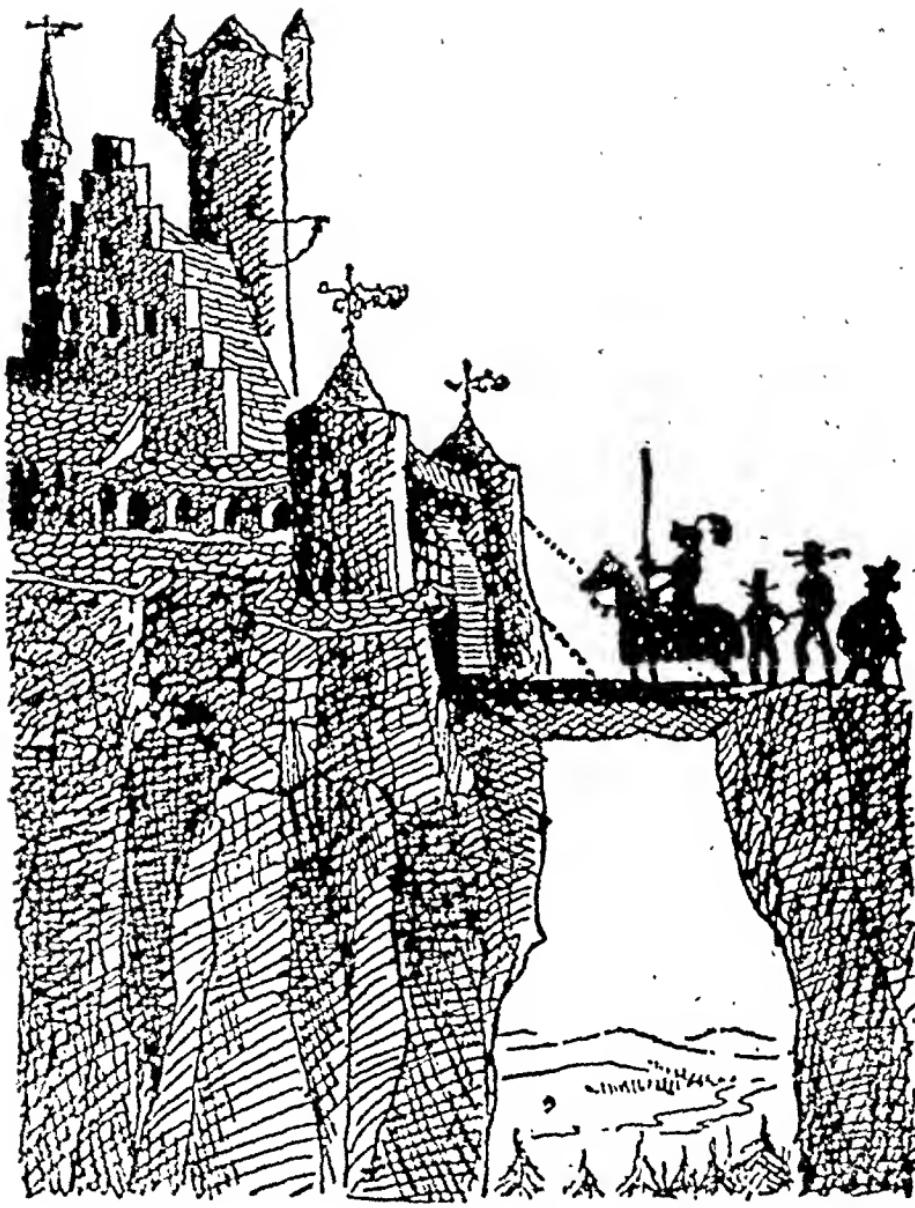
'Yes. She is in a high tower. Her hair is like a raven's plume, and her eyes are like hyacinths.'

'My friends,' said the Prince to his three companions, 'I have sworn to free that Princess from that evil creature. Will you all help?'

'We will!' promised Long, Broad and Quick Eye with one voice.

Then Long put the Prince and his horse on one shoulder, took Broad on the other, and Quick Eye on his back, and grew, and grew, until his legs were so long that he could cover fifty miles at each step.

The sun was setting by the time they



reached the iron castle, and its great black towers rose high against the golden sky. The Prince and his three servants went forward

unafraid, and the moment they had crossed the drawbridge, it drew itself up behind them, shutting off their only way of escape.

Long led the Prince's horse into the stables, and then he, Broad, and Quick Eye followed their master into the great hall of the castle, where they found several men in rich garments sitting or standing in groups. But when they went up to these men, they found that they had been turned to stone!

On a table in the centre of the hall a banquet was spread, with places set for four guests. Torches flamed on the walls, the roasted meats were smoking hot, but not a living creature was to be seen. After waiting a little while, the hungry travellers decided to taste the good fare so temptingly set before them.

They had hardly finished their supper when the door flew open with a loud crash, and the lord of the iron castle entered, leading a princess in a pearl crown. The lord of the castle was a man with a glossy bald head and a white beard which fell below his knees. He wore a flowing black robe, and three rings of iron encircled his body.

When the Prince beheld the lady of his dreams, he was ready to fall on one knee before her, but the wizard waved him back.

'Beware!' said the wizard, sternly. 'Stir but one inch, and you and your servants shall be turned into stone. I know why you have come here. And if you can fulfill the task which I shall set you, the Princess shall be yours.'

'What is the task?' the young Prince asked eagerly.

'For three nights you must keep watch in this hall. If you can prevent the Princess from escaping, you may claim her hand.'

'Is it the wish of the Princess that she should escape?' asked the puzzled Prince.

'No,' replied the wizard. 'It is mine—for though she may escape from you, she cannot—as yet—escape from me.'

'Very well,' said the Prince, 'but you must allow my three servants to stay with me.'

'Provided they are willing to share your punishment if you fail,' growled the wizard.

'We are willing,' cried Long, Broad, and Quick Eye with one voice.

The wizard, after seating the Princess in a chair, left the hall. Long then stretched him-



self all around the walls, Broad puffed himself out till he filled the doorway, and Quick Eye leaned against the pillar which supported the roof. Meanwhile the Prince approached the Princess with gallant and graceful words, but she heeded them no more than if her ears

had been made of stone. Realizing that she was under a spell and could neither see nor hear him, he seated himself on a footstool at her feet and resolved that he would not close even one eye that night.

But, strange to relate, in five minutes he and his three servants were fast asleep! Nor did they awake until the first faint silver streaks of dawn began to shine through the windows.

'The Princess!' exclaimed the young Prince, in despair. 'She is gone!'

'She is certainly gone, my lord,' said Quick Eye, 'but if Long will take me on his back, we shall soon bring her back again.'

'Where is she?' asked the bewildered Prince, gazing all round him.

'A hundred miles from here,' said Quick Eye, 'I can see a forest. In that forest there is an ancient oak tree. On top of the tree is a golden acorn. In that acorn the wizard has hidden the Princess.'

Away went Long, with Quick Eye on his shoulders, and in a few minutes they returned, bearing the little golden acorn, which Quick Eye handed to his master.

'Throw it upon the ground, my lord,' he said.

The Prince obeyed, and as the acorn touched the ground, the Princess appeared at his side.

A gruff laugh outside the door heralded the old wizard, chuckling wickedly. But his chuckles changed to a howl of dismay when he walked in and saw the Princess. A moment later one of his iron rings split and fell with a crash upon the stone floor.

Seizing the Princess by the hand, the wizard hurried from the room, and the Prince was left alone with his three servants. They spent the day exploring the many rooms in the castle, but no living creature did they meet. Three times food appeared by magic on the table in the great hall, and toward sunset the wizard returned, leading the Princess.

'Watch well, wakeful fellows!' said the wizard mockingly, as the silent Princess took her place in her chair.

The Prince and his three companions made great resolutions not to sleep, but no sooner had the wizard left than they again fell into a deep slumber which lasted until dawn. Then

the Prince sprang up with a cry of dismay.

'Wake up, Quick Eye, wake up—the Princess is gone!'

'To be sure, she is,' returned Quick Eye, 'but Long and I will soon bring her back. Two hundred miles from here there is a mountain. In the mountain there is a rock. In the rock there is a precious jewel—and in that jewel the Princess is hidden.'

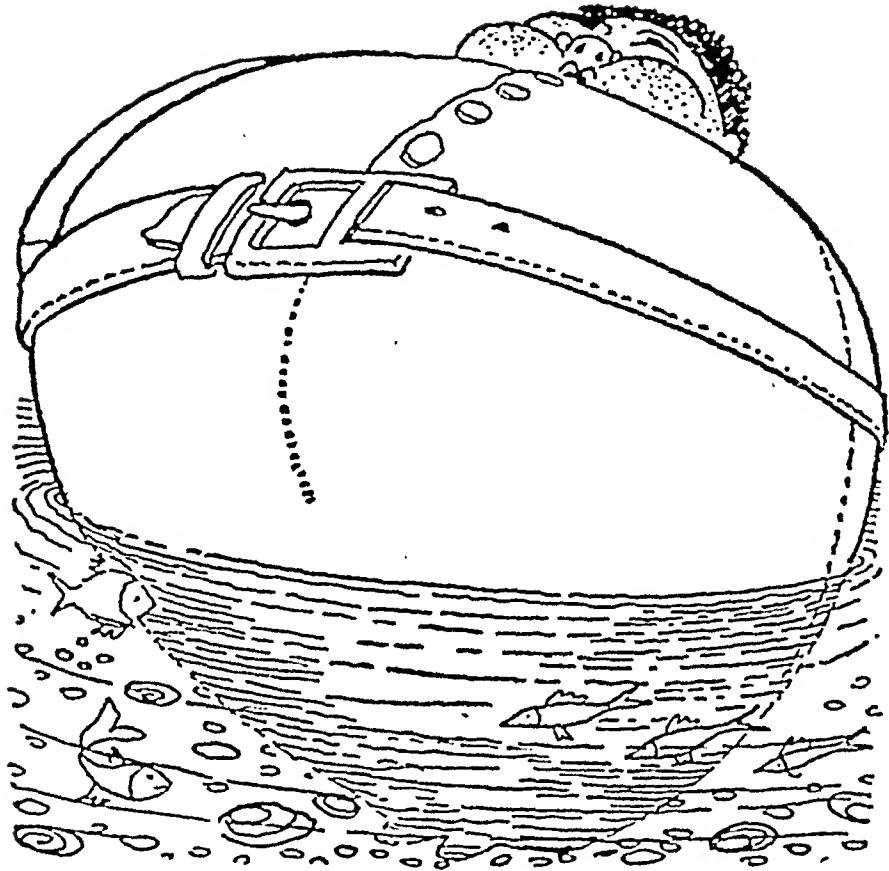
Away went Long, with his friend on his shoulders. As they approached the rock, Quick Eye untied his blindfold and gazed keenly at it. And the rock was split asunder, so that Long was able to pick up the jewel and bring it back to the Prince.

'Throw it upon the ground,' said Long.

The Prince obeyed, and in a twinkling the Princess stood beside him.

When the wizard entered a few moments later he uttered two loud howls of anger, and the second of his iron rings split and clanged upon the floor. Once more he dragged the Princess away with him, and once more his four guests were left until dusk.

Then the wizard returned to the hall, leading the Princess.



'You are very clever fellows,' he said, grimly. 'Let us see if my cleverness will not be a match for yours *this time*.'

No sooner had he withdrawn than the Prince and his servants, in spite of their desperate struggles, fell fast asleep. When the light of dawn shone through the window, the Prince leaped up with a cry.

'Quick Eye, Quick Eye, where is my Princess?'

Quick Eye untied his blindfold, shaded his eyes with his hand, and peered out.

'I see her, my lord, but she is very far away. Three hundred miles from here there is a deep, dark sea. In the middle of the sea lies a little pink shell. In the middle of the shell is a golden ring. And in that ring the Princess is hidden. Long must take Broad with him, as well as me, today.'

Off ran Long, with Quick Eye on one shoulder and Broad on the other. When they reached the deep, dark sea, Long waded in and Quick Eye told him where to stop, as there lay the little pink shell. But try as he would, Long could not reach the little pink shell, as it was on the sand in the bed of the sea.

'This is where I can help!' cried Broad.

So he puffed himself out, and grew bigger, and bigger, and bigger. And then he stooped down and drank and drank, and drank—until the waves had sunk low enough for Long to reach the little pink shell. Then they turned back toward the iron castle, and Long ran faster than he had ever run before, covering

twenty miles at each step. Still, the sun had risen before they reached the wizard's castle. At the very moment when the golden rays fell through the windows, the wizard entered the great hall, and his glee was wild when he saw that the Prince was sitting alone, wringing his hands in despair.

But before he could speak, there was a crash of breaking glass, and a gold ring came spinning through the window. As it touched the floor, the Princess appeared, no longer pale and silent, but with pink colour in her cheeks. Quick Eye had told Long what was happening, and Long had thrown the ring a whole mile, so that it fell into the hall just in time.

The wizard uttered three low howls of rage. Then his third iron ring split apart, and to the amazement of everyone he himself suddenly turned into a crow, and flew away through the broken window, croaking with fury.

Then all the marble suitors and their servants were restored to life, and yawned, and rubbed their eyes. The bare trees in the garden of the iron castle burst into green leaf and birds began to sing. Then the unsuccess-

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1 suitors all gathered round the Prince to thank him for breaking the spell.

'Do not thank me,' said the Prince. 'If it hadn't been for my three trusty servants, Long, Broad, and Quick Eye, I, too, would have been turned into stone.'

So he went to the stables, and Long led forth his good steed, and the Prince mounted it, and took the Princess before him on the saddle. Long carried Broad and Quick Eye on his shoulders and they all set off, as fast as the good steed could gallop and Long could run, for the kingdom of the Prince's father. Great was the joy of the old King when he welcomed his son and his beautiful daughter-in-law, and great were the rewards showered upon Long, Broad, and Quick Eye. The Prince tried to persuade his three faithful friends to stay in his service, but they thanked him and said they preferred to go forth again and seek for more adventures. And no doubt they found as many as they wanted!



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

ONCE upon a time, in a far-off country, there lived a very rich merchant who had six children, three boys and three girls. The three daughters were all beautiful, but particularly the youngest. In her childhood

everyone called her the Little Beauty. Then, being just as lovely when she was grown up, nobody called her by any other name.

This youngest daughter was not only prettier than her sisters, but also better tempered. The two eldest gave themselves a thousand airs, and refused to visit other merchants' daughters. They went every day to balls, plays, and public walks, and always made fun of their youngest sister for spending her time in reading or other useful employments. Many great merchants came to court the girls with proposals of marriage, but the two eldest always answered that, for their parts, they had no thoughts of marrying anyone less than a duke or an earl. Beauty had quite as many offers as her sisters, but she always answered, politely, that she would rather live some years longer with her father, as she thought herself too young to marry.

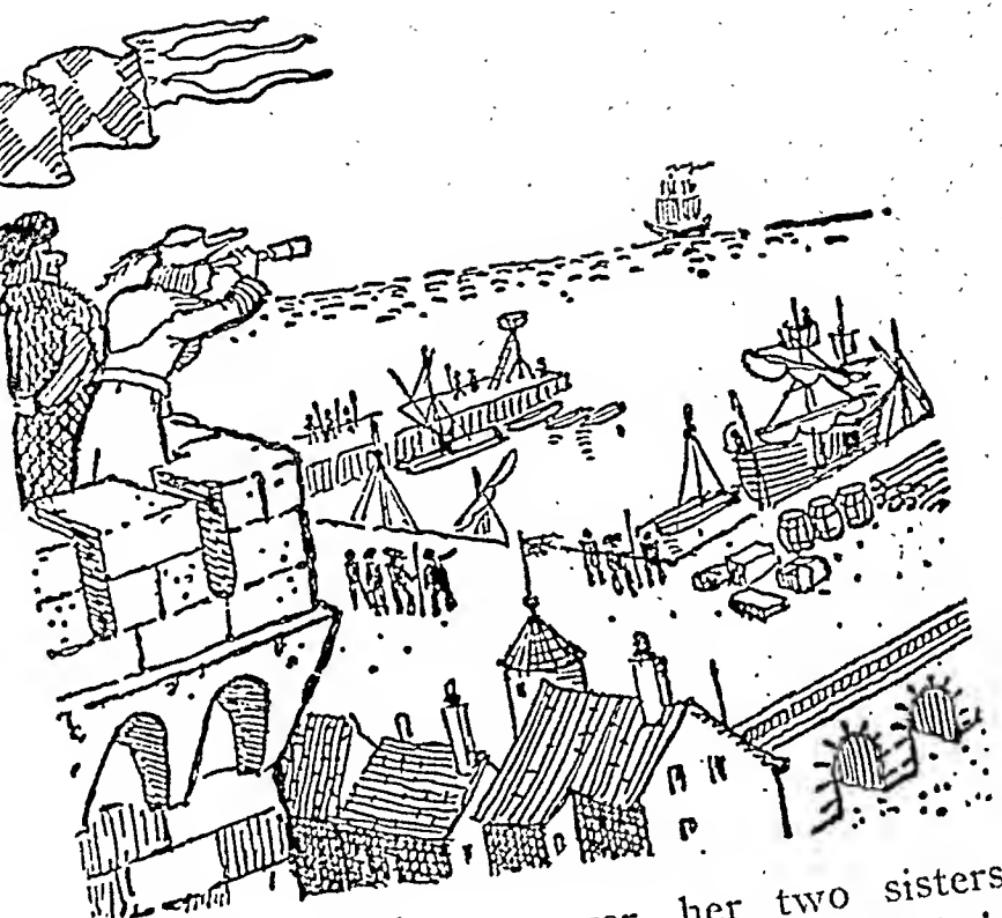
live by labour, for we have no other means of support.'

The two eldest daughters replied that they did not know how to work, and would not leave town, for they had sweethearts who would be glad to marry them. But in this belief they were mistaken, for when the merchants heard what had happened, they said, 'The girls were so proud and ill-tempered that we are not sorry at all to see their pride brought down. Let them show off their airs to their cows and sheep.'

Several gentlemen still came to court Beauty, because she was so sweet-tempered and kind to all, but Beauty still refused, saying that she could not think of leaving her poor father in this trouble.

When they moved to their cottage, the merchant and his three sons began to plough and sow the fields, and work in the garden. Beauty also did her part. She rose at four o'clock

ONCE there lived a merchant who had six children—
The three daughters particularly the youngest



Unlike Beauty, however, her two sisters were at a loss to pass the time. They had their breakfast in bed, and did not rise till ten o'clock. Then they walked out, but soon found themselves tired. They would often sit down under a shady tree, lament the loss of their town house and fine clothes, and say to each other, 'What a poor creature Beauty is, to be so content with this low way of life!'

But their father thought differently, and loved and admired his youngest child more than ever.

After they had lived like this for about a year, the merchant received a letter which informed him that one of his most valuable ships, which he thought was lost, had just come into port. This news was hailed with joy by the two eldest sisters, for they thought they could now leave the cottage and have all their finery again. When they found that their father must take a journey to the ship, they begged him not to forget to bring them back some new gowns, rings, and trinkets. But Beauty asked for nothing, for she believed that all the ship was worth would hardly buy everything her sisters wished for.

'Beauty,' said the merchant, 'how is it that you ask for nothing? What can I bring you, my child?'

'Since you are so kind as to think of me, dear father,' she answered, 'I would be glad if you would bring me a rose, for we have none in our garden.'

The merchant took his leave of them, and set out on his journey, but when he got to the

ship, he discovered that his profit was only enough to pay for the trip. He set out to return to his cottage as poor as when he had left it. But about thirty miles from his home, thinking of the joy of again meeting his children, he lost his way in the midst of a dense forest. It snowed very hard, and the wind was so strong as to throw him twice from his horse. Night came on, and he heard wolves howling round him.

All at once, his eyes saw a light a long way off. He made his way toward it and found that it came from a splendid palace. It had great bronze gates and fine courtyards, through which the merchant passed. But there was no sign of anybody. He went on into a large room where he found a cosy fire, and a table, upon which was a good dinner. After waiting for some time, the merchant, being faint for want of food, helped himself to a bit of chicken. Then he opened a door at the end of the hall, and went through it into a room in which there was a fine bed. He shut the door, took off his clothes, and got into it.

It was ten o'clock in the morning before the merchant awoke. He was amazed to see a

handsome new suit of clothes laid out for him, instead of his own, which had been torn. He looked out of the window, and instead of the snow-covered wood where he had lost himself the previous night, he saw arbours covered with all kinds of flowers.

Returning to the hall where he had supped, he found a breakfast table prepared. He ate a hearty meal, took his hat, and stepped out through the door. As he passed under one of the rose arbours, he thought of his promise to Beauty, and so he picked a rose to take home.

Instantly he heard a noise, and saw coming toward him a beast so frightful to look at that he was ready to faint with fear.

'Ungrateful man!' said the beast in a terrible voice. 'I have saved your life by admitting you into my palace, and in return you steal my flowers, which I value more than anything I possess.'

The merchant fell on his knees, and said, 'Sir, I humbly beg your pardon. I did not think it would offend you to gather a rose for one of my daughters, who had asked me to bring her one. Do not kill me, my lord!'

'I am not a lord,' replied the beast. 'I hate

false compliments, so do not flatter me by such titles. You tell me that you have daughters. Very well. I will allow you to escape, if one of them will come and live here in this palace. If not, you must promise that you will return yourself in three months, to be dealt with as I may choose.'

The kind merchant knew that if he seemed to accept the beast's offer, he would at least see his family once again, so he gave his promise, and was told that he might then set off as soon as he liked. 'But,' said the beast, 'I do not wish you to go back empty-handed. Go to the room you slept in, and you will find a chest there. Fill it with whatsoever you like best, and I will have it taken to your own house.'

When the beast had said this, he went away. The good merchant returned to the room he had slept in, and found many gold pieces lying about. He filled the chest with them, locked it, and left the palace as sadly as he had been glad when he first saw it. In a few hours he was home. His children came running toward him, but, instead of kissing them with joy, he could not help weeping as he looked at them. He held in his hand the rose,



which he gave to Beauty, saying, 'Take it. Beauty, but little do you know how dearly it has cost.' Then he told all that had happened.

The two eldest sisters now began to shed

tears, and to lay the blame upon Beauty. 'Why did not she ask for such things as we did?' they asked. 'But, to be sure, Miss must not be like other people. And though she may be the cause of her father's death, she does not shed a tear.'

'It would be useless,' replied Beauty, 'for my father shall not die. The beast will accept one of his daughters, so I will give myself up, and be only too happy to prove my love for the best of fathers.'

'No, sister,' said the three brothers with one voice. 'That cannot be. We will go in search of the beast, and either he or we will perish.'

'Do not hope to kill him,' said the merchant. 'His power is far too great. I am old, and cannot expect to live much longer, so I shall give up but a few years of my life, and shall only grieve for the sake of my children.'

'Never, Father!' cried Beauty. 'If you go back to the palace, I shall follow you.'

The merchant was so grieved at the thought of losing Beauty, that he forgot about the chest filled with gold, but at night, to his great surprise, he found it standing by his bedside.

Three months went by. Enriched by the gift of gold, they again lived in comfort. But then the merchant and Beauty got ready to set out for the palace of the beast. Upon this, the two sisters rubbed their eyes with an onion, to make believe they were crying. The merchant and his sons cried in earnest. Only Beauty shed no tears.

Beauty and her father reached the beast's palace in a very few hours. In the large hall, they found a table covered with choice meat and fruits, and two plates set in place. The merchant had very little appetite. But Beauty, in spite of her fright, began to eat, thinking all the time that, to be sure, the beast had provided a fine welcome. When they had finished supper, they heard a noise, and the merchant bid his daughter a tearful farewell, for he knew it was the beast coming to them.

When Beauty first saw that frightful form, she was very much terrified, but tried to hide her fear. The creature walked up to her, and then asked her in a deep voice if she had come of her own will.

‘Yes,’ said Beauty.

‘Then you are a good girl, and I am very



much obliged to you,' was the beast's surprisingly polite reply.

The beast then bid her good night. Beauty went to bed, thinking that she would not be

able to close her eyes, but she soon fell into a deep sleep, and dreamed of a handsome prince who came up to her and said, ‘Beauty, do not be afraid of anything. You shall not go without a reward.’

As soon as Beauty awoke, she soon resolved not to make her sad case still worse by sorrow, but to wait and be patient. She walked about to view all of the palace, and the elegance of every part of it delighted her.

But what was her surprise, when she came to a door on which was written, BEAUTY'S ROOM! She opened it, and her eyes were dazzled by its splendour. There was a large library filled with books and many paintings. Beauty began to think that the beast, besides being very powerful, was also very kind.

About the middle of the day Beauty found a table set for her, and music played all the time she was dining, without her seeing anybody. But at supper, when she was going to seat herself at table, she heard the beast approach, and could not help trembling with fright.

‘Beauty,’ said he, ‘will you allow me to watch you as you eat?’

'That is as you please,' answered Beauty.

'Not in the least,' said the beast. 'You alone command in this place. If you do not like my company, you need only say so, and I will leave you that moment.' Altogether he seemed so gentle and so unhappy, that Beauty, who had the kindest heart in the world, felt her fear of him gradually vanish.

She ate her supper and they talked together, till at last, when the beast rose to go, he startled her by asking in his gruff voice, 'Beauty, will you marry me?'

Beauty answered in a very firm tone, 'No, beast.'

The beast, in turn, did not do anything but sigh deeply and leave.

When Beauty found herself alone, she began to feel pity for the poor beast. 'What a sad thing it is,' she said, 'that he should be so frightful, since he is so good and kind.'

Beauty lived three months in this palace very well pleased. The beast talked with her every night while she ate. Every night, before he went away, he asked her if she would be his wife, and she always answered, 'No.' At last, one night, she said to him, 'I wish I could

take such a liking to you as to agree to marry you, but I must tell you that I do not think it will ever happen.'

'I know full well how frightful I am,' sighed the beast, 'but I love you better than myself. Yet I am pleased that you stay with me. Promise, Beauty, that you will never leave me.'

Beauty would almost have agreed to this, so sorry was she for him, but she longed to see her father again. 'If you do not allow me to visit him, it will break my heart,' she said.

'I would rather break mine, Beauty,' answered the beast. 'I will send you to your father's cottage. You shall stay there and I shall die of sorrow.'

'No,' said Beauty, crying. 'I love you too well to be the cause of your death. I promise to return in a week.'

'You shall find yourself with your father tomorrow morning,' replied the beast. 'When you wish to return, you need only put your ring on a table when you go to bed. Good-bye, Beauty!' The beast sighed as he said these words, and Beauty went to bed very sorry to see him so much grieved.



When she awoke in the morning, she found herself in her father's cottage. As soon as he saw Beauty, the merchant ran to her and

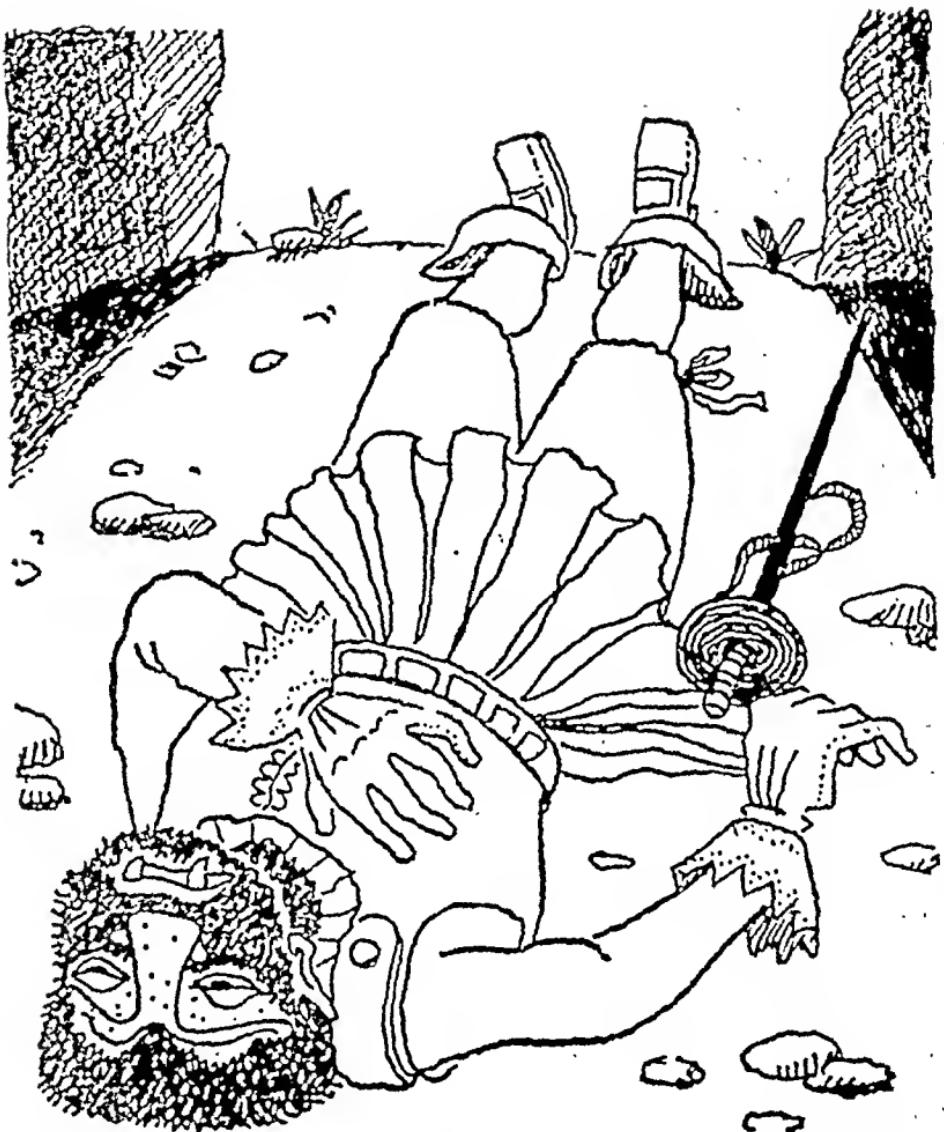
kissed her a hundred times. The three brothers also greeted their sister joyfully.

Later in the day, Beauty learned that her sisters had both wed while she had been away. They both lived unhappily with the gentlemen they had married. When they saw Beauty looking so happy, all the kindness that she showed them was of no use. They were annoyed more than ever when she told them how well she lived at the palace of the beast. The sisters went off by themselves and cried to think of her good fortune.

'Why should she be better off than we?' they said. They immediately decided that they would try to keep her longer than the week for which the beast had given her leave. Then, so they thought, he would be angry enough to disown her.

When the week was ended, the two sisters pretended such grief at the thought of her leaving them, that she agreed to stay a week more. But Beauty could not help thinking of the poor beast, and missed his company.

The tenth night at the cottage, Beauty dreamed that the beast lay dying in a cave. With his last breath he reminded her of her



promise to return. Beauty awoke with a start, and burst into tears. 'Am I not wicked,' she said, 'to behave so badly to a beast who has shown me so much kindness? Why will I not marry him? I am sure I would be more happy

with him than my sisters are with their husbands. He shall not be unhappy any longer on my account!'

She then rose, put her ring on the table, got into bed again, and soon fell asleep. In the morning she found herself in the palace. But the beast was nowhere about. Beauty ran from room to room, calling out, 'Beast, dear beast,' but there was no answer.

At last she remembered her dream. She rushed to the cave outside the palace, and there saw him, lying on his back and breathing faintly. Forgetting all his ugliness, she fetched some water and sprinkled it over him, weeping and sobbing the while.

The beast opened his eyes. 'You forgot your promise, Beauty, and I could not live without you. But I shall die content, since I have seen your face once more.'

'No, dear beast,' cried Beauty. 'You shall not die. You shall live to be my husband. I thought it was only friendship I felt for you, but now I know it was love.'

The moment Beauty spoke these words, the beast disappeared. In his place she saw a handsome young prince—the prince she had



seen in her dream the first night of her stay in the palace and also in many dreams since.

'Where is my beloved beast?' asked Beauty.

'I am he,' replied the prince. 'A wicked enchantment long ago changed me into the form of a beast. The spell would be broken only when a beautiful lady consented to marry me. You alone, dearest Beauty, judged me not by my looks, but by my heart. Take it then, and all that I have besides!' And so they were married and lived happily ever after.



THE KING OF THE GOLDEN MOUNTAIN

HERE was once a merchant who had two children, a boy and a girl. They were both small and not old enough to run about. He had also two richly laden ships at sea, and just

as he was expecting to make a great deal of money by the merchandise, news came that they had both been lost. So now instead of being a rich man he was quite poor, and had nothing left but one field near the town. To turn his thoughts from his misfortune, he went out into this field. And as he was walking up and down, a dwarf appeared before him and asked why he was so sad.

The merchant said, 'I would tell you if you could help me.'

'Who knows?' answered the dwarf. 'Perhaps I could.'

Then the merchant told him that all his wealth had been lost in a wreck, and that now he had nothing left but this field.

'Don't worry yourself,' said the dwarf. 'If you will promise to bring me in twelve years' time the first thing which rubs against your legs when you go home tonight, you shall have as much gold as you want.'

The merchant thought, 'What could it be but my dog?' He said yes, and went home.

When he reached the house, his little son, delighted to see his father, ran up and seized him by the leg to steady himself.

The merchant was horror-stricken, for now he knew what he had promised to give away. But as he still found no gold in his chests, he thought it must only have been a joke of the dwarf's. A month later he went up into the loft to gather together some old tin to sell it, and there he found a great heap of gold on the floor. So he was soon up in the world again. He bought and sold, and became a richer merchant than ever.

In the meantime the boy grew up and became both clever and wise. But the nearer the end of the twelve years came, the more sorrowful and mournful the merchant grew.

One day his son asked him what was the matter, and persisted so long that at last the father told him what he had promised.

Then his son said, 'Father, don't be frightened! It will be all right. The little dwarf has no power over me.'

When the time came, the son and his father went to the field together. When the little dwarf appeared he said, 'Have you brought what you promised me?'

The man was silent, but his son said, 'What do you want?'

'My business is with your father and not with you,' the dwarf said.

The son answered, 'You deceived and cheated my father. Give me back his bond.'

'Oh, no!' said the little man. 'I won't give up my rights.'

They talked to each other for a long time. At last they decided that, as the son no longer belonged to his father and did not care to belong to the dwarf, he should get into a boat on a flowing stream, and his father should himself push it off, thus giving him up to the stream.

So the youth took leave of his father, got into the boat, and his father pushed it off. Then, thinking that his son was lost to him forever, he went home and sorrowed for him. The little boat, however, did not sink. It drifted quietly down the stream, and the youth sat in it in perfect safety. It drifted for a long time till at last it stuck fast on an unknown shore.

The youth landed, and seeing a beautiful castle near, walked toward it. As he passed through the door, however, a spell fell upon him. He went through all the rooms, but

found them empty till he came to the very last one, where a serpent lay coiling and uncoiling itself.

The serpent was really an enchanted maiden, who was delighted when she saw the youth and said, 'Have you come at last, my preserver? I have been waiting twelve years for you. This whole kingdom is bewitched and you must break the spell.'

'How am I to do that?' he asked.

She said, 'Tonight twelve men with chains will appear, and they will ask what you are doing here. But do not speak a word, whatever they do or say to you. They will strike and pinch you, but don't say a word. At twelve o'clock they will have to go away. On the second night twelve more will come, and on the third twenty-four. These will cut off your head. But at twelve o'clock their power goes, and if you have borne it and not spoken a word, I shall be saved. Then I will come to you and bring a little flask containing the Water of Life, with which I will sprinkle you, and you will be brought to life again.'

Then he said, 'I will gladly save you.'

Everything happened just as she had said.



The cruel men could not force a word out of him. And on the third night the serpent be-

came a beautiful princess, who brought the Water of Life as she had promised, and restored the youth to life. Then she fell on his neck and kissed him, and there was great rejoicing all over the castle.

Their marriage was celebrated and he became King of the Golden Mountain.

They lived happily together, and in course of time a beautiful boy was born to them.

When eight years had passed, the King's heart grew tender within him as he thought of his father, and he wanted to go home to see him. But the Queen did not want him to go.

She said, 'I know it will be to my misfortune.' He gave her no peace, however, till she agreed to let him go.

On his departure she gave him a wishing ring and said, 'Take this ring and put it on your finger, and you will be where you wish to be. Only you must promise never to use it to wish me away from here to be with you at your father's.'

He made the promise and put the ring on his finger. He then wished himself before the town where his father lived, and at the same moment found himself at the gate. But the

sentry would not let him in because his clothes, though of rich material, were of such strange cut. So he went up a mountain where a shepherd lived, and exchanging clothing with him, passed into the town unnoticed.

When he reached his father he began making himself known. His father, never thinking that it was his son, said that it was true he had once had a son, but he had long been dead.

The supposed shepherd said to his parents, 'I am indeed your son. Is there no mark on my body by which you may know me?'

His mother said, 'Yes, our son had a mark under his right arm.'

He pushed up his shirt sleeve and there was the mark, so they no longer doubted that he was their son. He told them that he was the King of the Golden Mountain, his wife was a princess, and they had a little son.

'That can't be true,' said his father. 'You are a fine sort of king to come home in a tattered shepherd's smock.'

His son grew angry. Without stopping to think, he turned his ring round and wished his wife and son to appear. In moment they

both stood before him, but his wife did nothing but weep and lament, and said that he had broken his promise.

He said, 'I have acted foolishly, but from no bad motive.' And he tried to soothe her.

Afterwards, he took her outside the town to the field and showed her the stream down which he had drifted in the little boat. Then he said, 'I am tired. I want to rest.'

So she sat down, and he rested his head upon her lap and soon fell fast asleep. As soon as he was asleep, she drew the ring from his finger and drew herself gently away from him, leaving only her slipper behind. Last of all, taking her child in her arms, she wished herself back in her own kingdom. When he woke up, he found himself deserted.

'I can certainly never go home to my parents,' he said. 'They would say I was a sorcerer. I must go away and walk till I reach my own kingdom again.'

So he went away, and at last he came to a mountain where three giants were quarrelling about the division of their father's property. When they saw him passing, they called to him and said, 'Little people have sharp wits,'



and asked him to divide their inheritance for them.

It consisted first, of a sword, with which in one's hand, if one said, 'All heads off, mine alone remain!' every head fell to the ground;

second, of a mantle which made anyone putting it on invisible; third, of a pair of boots which transported the wearer to whatever place he wished.

He said, 'Give me the three articles so that I may see if they are all in good condition.'

So they gave him the mantle and he at once became invisible. He took his own shape again and said, 'The mantle is good. Now give me the sword.'

But they said, 'No, we can't give you the sword. If you were to say, 'All heads off, mine alone remain!' all heads would fall to the ground, and yours would be the only one left.'

At last, however, they gave it to him on condition that he was to try it on a tree. He did as they wished, and the sword went through the tree trunk as if it had been a straw.

Then he wanted the boots, but they said, 'No, we won't give them away. If you were to put them on and wish yourself on the top of the mountain, we would be left standing here without anything.'

'No,' said he, 'I won't do that.'

So they gave him the boots too. But when

he had all three, he could think of nothing but his wife and child, and he said to himself, 'Oh, if only I were on the Golden Mountain again!' And immediately he disappeared from the sight of the giants.

When he approached his castle he heard sounds of music—fiddles and flutes and shouts of joy. People told him that his wife was celebrating her forthcoming marriage with another man.

He put on his mantle and went to the castle, invisible to all. Then he went into the hall, where a great feast was spread with the richest foods and the costliest wines, and the guests were joking and laughing while they ate and drank. The Queen sat on her throne in their midst in gorgeous clothing, with the crown on her head.

He placed himself behind her, and no one saw him. Whenever the Queen put a piece of meat on her plate, he took it away and ate it, and when her glass was filled he took it away and drank it. Her plate and her glass were constantly refilled, but she never had anything, for it disappeared at once. At last she grew frightened, got up, and went to her

room in tears, but he followed her there too. 'Did I deserve such treatment at your hands?' his voice asked.

Then he made himself visible, and went into the hall and cried, 'The wedding is stopped. The real king has come.'

The kings, princes, and nobles who were present laughed him to scorn. But he only said, 'Will you go, or will you not?'

They tried to seize him, but he drew his sword and said, 'All heads off, mine alone remain!'

Then in an instant all their heads fell to the ground, and he remained sole King and Lord of the Golden Mountain.



SPINDLE, SHUTTLE, AND NEEDLE

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl who lived with her godmother in a small cottage at the far end of a village. The old woman earned her living by spinning, weav-

ing and sewing, and brought up her godchild in good and industrious habits.

When the girl was grown up, her godmother fell ill. She called the girl to her bedside and said, 'I have not long to live. I leave you my cottage, which will at least shelter you, and also my spindle, my weaver's shuttle, and my needle. These may help you earn your daily bread.' Then she laid her hands on the girl's head, blessed her, and, soon afterward, died.

Saddened by her loss, the girl lived all alone in the cottage. She worked hard, spinning, weaving and sewing, and her old godmother's blessing seemed to make her prosper. The flax seemed to spread and increase, and when she wove a carpet or a piece of linen, or made a shirt, she was sure to find a customer who paid her well, so that not only did she feel no want herself, but she was able to help those who did.

It happened about this time that the king's son was making a tour of the country, looking for a suitable bride. He could not marry a poor maiden and he did not wish for a rich one.

'My wife,' he said, 'shall be one who is at once the poorest and the richest.'

When he reached the village where the girl lived, he asked who was the richest and the poorest maiden there. The richest was named first. And the poorest, he was told, was a young girl who lived alone in a little cottage at the far end of the village.

The rich girl sat at her door dressed in all her best clothes, and when the king's son drew near she got up and curtsied in the nicest manner. He looked well at her, said nothing, and rode on.

There was no one at the door when he reached the poor girl's cottage, for she was busily at work in her room. The prince reined in his horse, looked in at the window through which the sun was shining brightly, and saw the girl sitting at her wheel, spinning away.

She looked up, and when she saw the king's son gazing in at her she blushed red all over, lowered her eyes, and spun on. She went on spinning till the king's son had ridden off. Then she stepped to the window and opened the lattice, saying, 'The room is so hot,' but she looked after him as long as she could.

Then she sat down to her work once more and spun on, and as she did so an old saying, which she had often heard her godmother repeat while at work, came to mind. She sang:

'Spindle, spindle, go and see
If my love will come to me.'

Lo and behold, the spindle leaped from her hand and rushed out of the room, and when she had recovered from her surprise to look after it, she saw it dancing merrily through the fields, trailing a long golden thread after it, and soon it was lost to sight.

The girl, having lost her spindle, took up the shuttle and, seating herself at her loom, began to weave. Meantime the spindle danced on and on, and just as it had come to the end of the golden thread it reached the king's son.

'What do I see?' he cried. 'This spindle seems to wish to point out the way to me.' So he turned his horse's head and rode back beside the golden thread.

Meantime the girl sat weaving and sang:

'Shuttle, weave both web and woof,
Bring my love beneath my roof.'

The shuttle instantly escaped from her hand and with one bound was out at the door. On the threshold it began weaving the loveliest carpet that ever was seen. The shuttle flew from side to side and the carpet seemed almost to grow of itself.

Now that the shuttle had run away, the girl sat down to sew. She took her needle and sang:

*'Needle, needle, stitch away;
Make my chamber bright and gay.'*

The needle promptly slipped from her fingers and flew about the room like lightning. In next to no time the table and benches were covered with green cloth, the chairs with velvet, and elegant silk curtains hung before the windows. The needle had barely put in its last stitch when the girl, glancing at the window, spied the white-plumed hat of the king's son, who was being led back by the spindle with the golden thread.

He dismounted and walked over the carpet into the house, and when he entered the room, there stood the girl, blushing like any rose. 'You are the poorest—and yet the richest,' he



said. 'Come with me now and be my bride.'

She said nothing, but she held out her hand. Then he kissed her and led her out, lifted her

on his horse, and took her to his royal palace, where the wedding was celebrated amid great rejoicing.

As for the spindle, the shuttle and the needle—they were placed in the treasury and were always held in the highest honour.



THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD

ONCE upon a time, a poor woodcutter lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut near a forest. The oldest of the daughters was lazy and did not care to work. The second daughter was careless and untidy. But the youngest daughter was always good, kind and obedient.

One morning, as the woodcutter set forth for his daily work in the forest, he asked the oldest daughter to bring him his lunch at noon. 'I will scatter oats as I go,' he said, 'so you need only look for them and follow.'

When the sun was high in the sky, the oldest girl started out through the forest with some food prepared by the woodcutter's wife. But the sparrows, larks and finches had eaten all the oats, and so the girl could not find her way. She went on, nevertheless, until the sun went down. The trees rustled in the darkness and owls screeched, but at last she came to a house in the wood, guided by a light from the window. She knocked at the door and a gruff voice called out, 'Come in.'

She stepped over the threshold and saw an old man sitting at a table. Near him were three animals—a hen, a rooster and a cow.

After telling the old man that she had lost her way, the oldest daughter asked, 'May I rest here for the night?'

The old man turned to the animals and asked:

*'Little chicks and spotted cow,
What shall be our answer now?'*

A crow, a cackle and a moo was their reply. It meant, 'Yes, she may stay.' The girl thereupon set about cooking a good meal for her self. She ate all she wanted, but never a thought did she give to the poor animals. When she had finished eating, she heard voices saying:

'We've had no food, we've had no drink.
Of others' needs you do not think.
Now, go!'

She suddenly found herself alone in the forest again. And so she had to find her way home as best she could.

Next morning the woodcutter asked his second daughter to bring him his lunch at noon. 'I will scatter peas as I go,' he said, 'so you need only look for them and follow the path.'

At midday the second girl started off through the forest, but the wild rabbit had eaten all the peas, and so the girl could not find her way. She wandered about, and when evening came she reached the house in the wood, as had the oldest daughter before her.

'May I rest here for the night?' she asked.



The old man turned to the animals and asked:

*'Little chicks and spotted cow,
What shall be our answer now?'*

The animals again crowed and cackled and mooed, 'Yes, she may stay,' So the second daughter set about cooking a good meal, and then she ate all she wanted, giving never a thought to the animals. Afterward she, too, heard voices saying:

*'We've had no food, we've had no drink.
Of others' needs you do not think—
Now, go!'*

Then the second daughter found herself alone in the forest, and she had to find her way home as best she could.

The third day it was the youngest daughter's turn to try to take a lunch to her father.

'I will scatter corn kernels as I go,' the woodcutter told her. 'You need only look for them and follow the path.'

But when she started out through the forest with her father's lunch, the wood pigeons had eaten all the corn, and so she, too, could not find her way. She wandered about until dark and then saw the light from the house in the wood. Then she went in and, as with her sisters, asked the old man for a full night's rest. The old man turned once again to the animals and asked:

*'Little chicks and spotted cow,
What shall be our answer now?'*

Their answer was, 'Yes, she may stay.'

Then the youngest daughter went over to the animals and stroked them all gently. She cooked some food for the old man, but before she ate any herself she gave the rooster some barley, the hen some corn, and the spotted cow some sweet-smelling hay. 'Eat well,' she told the animals. And then she brought them some water.

When she had at last seated herself at the

table, the youngest daughter was startled to hear many strange sounds. The beams shook and the stairs seemed to be crumbling. Then there was a loud crash and all was still.

But now everything was changed! The little house in the wood had suddenly turned into a palace! Shiny gold and silver furnishings glittered everywhere. Most amazing of all, the three animals had changed to three servants, ready to wait on her every command, and the old man was now a handsome prince, who took the youngest daughter's hand tenderly in his own and explained what had happened. 'A wicked spell was cast over me,' he said. 'I was obliged to live in the wood as an old man and my three servants were themselves changed into a rooster, a hen and a cow. The spell could only be broken by a maiden whose kind heart would care not only for the needs of men, but also for those of animals.'

In time, the youngest daughter and the prince found themselves very much in love with each other. They were married amid much rejoicing and they lived happily in the beautiful palace for the rest of their days.

